

THE  
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*Where, but  
from the ranks  
of labour, have  
the despots of  
Europe raised  
their fighting  
slaves to keep  
their brother  
slaves in awe?*

W. LOVETT.

## Bolshevism: Past and Present

### SOME HISTORICAL DEBUNKING

*Die Geschichte des Bolschevismus* (Rohwolt Verlag, Berlin, 1932). *The History of Bolshevism*, by Arthur Rosenberg, should appear any day in English. The author, who was, up to Hitler's rise to power, a professor of history at the University of Berlin, and from 1920 to 1927 a member of the Communist Party of Germany, a member of the central committee of that Party, and a member of the executive committee of the Communist International, states that he does not wish to present the viewpoint of any party or group, or retail scandal in regard to Russian inner court politics, but that he aims to set forth an objective account and study of the beginnings, past tendencies and present direction of Bolshevism

elements that, from 1918 to date, have been flirting with acts and slogans that they did not try too hard to analyse.

The book begins with a study of the historic developments of Marxist thought. The writer points out that in the course of the second half of the 19th century the organised working-class movement of Europe passed through two stages, each possessing a distinct theoretic programme.

The declared aim of the first was the completion, by the proletariat, of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, with Socialism as the ultimate goal. Here the workers found themselves under the leadership of small groups of professional revolutionists who hailed from the ranks of the radical bourgeois intellectuals. This stage is typified by Marx and Engels of 1848, and, because of the similarity of local social circumstances, by Russian Bolshevism in the 20th century.

In the second stage, the Western European workers had so far developed that they directed themselves in their own organisations. In spite of the theoretic growth of Marx and the implication of his later writings, the revolutionary aim was generally set aside, and the workers' political organisations adopted as their programme the betterment of their lot within the framework of the capitalist society they lived in. This forms the period of the Second International.

When the development of the labour movement is traced in an historically logical progression, declares the author, one reaches a third stage and a new political attitude. This attitude marks the completion of the Marxian programme for the future. Here the working class is fully aware of its fitness to lead itself, and, no longer satisfied with the promise of having its condition

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as a social phenomenon. The book is a striking confirmation of the stand taken by the Socialist Party of Great Britain on the Russian upheaval and the historic rôle of the Bolsheviks. As such, the translated "History" will sow consternation, and possibly also understanding, among the various uncritical, utopian - radical



bettered within the framework of capitalist society, wants to attain power. This is no longer to be a radical-democratic revolution, as in the first stage, but a Socialist revolution, which is to change capitalist property to the common property of society. In this revolution, the workers will not be the led instrument of a party directorate, but will act unaided, in accordance with their class understanding.

The conditions requisite for the third stage are: first, an extraordinary advance in the development of capitalism; second, the approximate destruction of the middle layers found between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, so that all tactics of alliance on the part of the proletariat, on a national democratic basis, become superfluous; lastly, the overwhelming majority of the exploited must find themselves in conscious opposition to the small minority of the capitalist exploiters. That is, the third stage calls for the revolutionary education of the proletariat, who, by their own strength, through their own will and self-discipline, are to win power and build a new world.

The European working class of the World War generation had not yet reached the height of the third stage. The theoretic protagonists of this political attitude, as Rosa Luxembourg in Germany, Gorter in Holland, and scattered, small groups in other parts of Europe, had a limited following. At the same time, the theorists of the second stage were leading all the existing large Labour Parties. Among them were two distinct groups. The revisionists, led by Bernstein, recognised that the only practical object of the "Labour" Parties of the Second International was reform inside of capitalist society. They called for open programmatic revision. Opposed to them were the "radicals," as Kautsky, Bebel, etc., then in charge of the International, who, though content with a practically reformist programme, objected to having open political compromise "written down in the books."

All three tendencies, including the two subdivisions of the second, found adaptations in Russia. Echoing either the "revisionism" or "radicalism" of the German Social Democracy, the Mensheviks proposed the abolition of Czarism and the institution of Western liberal political institutions that would allow the free capitalist development of Russia. The majority group, the Bolsheviks, had a programme that was, excepting for special organisational details, a very modest and somewhat distorted copy of the ten measures proposed by Marx and Engels in the second chapter of the Manifesto of 1848. This programme was to be applied through what Lenin called the "democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants," which was to have a democratic coalition-government guise, but was to be guided by a hand-picked party directorate. This supervised partnership of the workers and peasants was

going to deal with the growing Russian capitalism organised in a national syndicate of industrialists (the Corporative State!) and wait for the Socialist revolution that would in time take place in the industrially advanced Western Europe.

The theories of Luxembourg and Gorter—representing the third stage of Marxist thought—found a response in Russia in the voice of the precocious Trotsky, who opposed the Bolshevik plan of a dictatorship by a small circle of leaders over the workers which was made necessary by Lenin's programme of a coalition of the Russian proletariat with the peasantry. He held that soon after coming to power the idyll of the democratic dictatorship over Russian capitalism would be marred by trouble with the syndicated capitalists on the one hand, and by the struggle between the two partners in the dictatorship, on the other. Trotsky conceded that in a backward agrarian country such as Russia the Socialist workers could not get a majority against the peasants. The salvation of a proletarian move in Russia therefore lay in a revolution in Western Europe. "The Socialist workers' revolution can only survive, if it spreads; it dies, if limited to our country."

The judgment of history on Trotsky, comments the author, will be made doubly difficult, inasmuch as in 1917 he formally took sides with the Bolsheviks who, in the fervour of the unhinged world situation, and roused by their own national victory, adopted, and for a time called their own, the Luxembourg and Gorter lingo of the "permanent and spreading World Revolution." In 1927 came the unavoidable reaction and break. The national needs of Russia brought the Bolsheviks back to their original programme. Trotsky's claim that he represents true Bolshevism (and genuine Leninism), in opposition to the present leadership of the Russian State, can, therefore, bear no authority for objective historic analysis.

The existence of the Bolshevik group within the Second International was made possible by the Russians' belief in the similarity of their own programme and organisation to the German Social Democracy. Indeed, before 1914, Lenin recognised the inner circle of the German party as a sort of party directorate. He was a supporter of the "radical" section of the Social Democracy. The personal hate with which Lenin pursued Kautsky after 1914 cannot be explained, indicates the author, merely by their difference of opinion in regards to the degree and manner of opposing the war. "Thus hates only he who had loved too much." So did Lenin revenge himself for having followed and honoured Kautsky for 20 years.

And the so-called "Fall of the Second International," so warmly dramatised by Lenin, the author sees as no fall at all, but as the logical victory of the "revisionists" over the muddled

"radicals" inside the Social Democracy. Contradicting Lenin, he indicates that the degree of militant opposition to the war shown by the various "Socialist" parties had little connection with the "revisionism" or "radicalism" of their programmes. Bernstein was a more militant war objector than Kautsky. The reformist "Socialist Party of Italy" did, it is true, show out-and-out opposition to having Italy enter the war on the side of the Triple Alliance in 1914; but on anti-revolutionary grounds—sympathy with the Entente. The "Labour" parties formed small minorities and could not have taken effective steps against the war, as was shown by the Bolsheviks' own helplessness in the Russia of 1914.

On the 22nd of January, 1917, in Switzerland, Lenin stated at a public meeting that "We of the older generation will possibly not live to see the battles of the coming revolution." His programme still provided for a workers' revolution in Western Europe—this relegated in the manner of Kautsky to the dim future—but it spoke of an early Russian uprising, which was to complete the bourgeois democratic revolution under the supervision of a workers' and peasants' coalition government.

Later the same year, when he was already in Russia, he cast aside the old Bolshevik plan of a peasants' and workers' dictatorship—that is, a "populist" and "Socialist" coalition government—and spoke of seizing power in Russia to aid an imminent Western European proletarian revolution. Here he met opposition in his own Bolshevik group.

The most numerous party of the moment, the peasant-populist "Socialist Revolutionaries," wanted to control the government of the country as a "loyal opposition," having adopted the Menshevik position of 1905. In accordance with their programme, the spontaneous Soviets of workers, peasants and soldiers were to be the organs of democratic control that was to be exercised over the new government till the convening of the constitutional assembly, which was then to take over the job of supervising the reconstruction of Russia.

In Switzerland, in 1917, Lenin, who had doubted the historic use of the Soviet in 1905, made the sudden discovery that the popular Russian council was the typical State form of the coming "Socialist revolution." He declared that the Soviet was Marx's State form, in which the armed people are the police and army, and in which functionaries are controlled directly by the people—resembling in this respect the medieval city states and the direct democracy of the early American settlements. (The author points out that the current Soviet system, as developed from 1918 on, popularly bears the name of the Russian institution of 1905 and 1917, but is entirely distinct from it.)

Lenin's slogan of "All power to the Soviets!" was tantamount at first to the establishment of a revolutionary-democratic coalition, as the Bolsheviks were still in the minority in the Soviets. It meant giving power to the masses, as the Soviets of 1917 were more or less the spontaneous organs of representation built by the masses themselves. Privately, however, Lenin had not given up the idea of a dictatorship by a centralised party. His theses called for a break with the Allied Governments, the non-support by the Soviets (the actual holder of State power), of the provisional government, the confiscation of the large estates, the regulation and taxation of large industry, but not the "institution of Socialism." The masses wanted land, peace and bread. He was ready to assume power.

The opposition of the majority of the old Bolsheviks to the "rearmed" Lenin was embodied in Kamenev's analysis of the situation: a Socialist workers' party gaining power can only have as its programme a Socialist revolution; this, in a predominantly agricultural country, was to be considered adventurous in the light of orthodox Bolshevik teachings. Trotsky's estimate of the situation paralleled Kamenev's, but he thought he saw the possibility of a Socialist revolution in Western Europe. He thought he saw in Lenin's changed outlook adherence to his own "internationalist" ideas, and, in this comedy of wishes and mistakes, Lenin found in Trotsky, who had now joined the Bolshevik organisation, support against his own comrades.

The author's appraisal is that the "rearmed" Bolsheviks did not make the October revolution, but that they saved the popular revolution of 1917 by leading the completion of the victory of the masses. (According to Trotsky's testimony, it was the Military Committee of the Soviets, and not the Central Executive of the Bolshevik group, that engineered the actual gesture of the insurrection.) If Lenin and Trotsky had run aground in October, no democratic development would have come but the anarchy and chaos of popular fury, which might have ended in pogroms and white terror. At 5 minutes to 12, so to speak, they proclaimed the uprising, giving the impression of a sudden occurrence taking place at their command. By heeding the will of the masses, neo-Bolshevism won the authority to lead Russia further.

The five "revolutionary-democratic" proposals—the economic programme of victorious Bolshevism—were the nationalisation of the banks, the nationalisation or government regulation of the biggest capitalist monopolies (sugar, oil, coal and metal), the obligatory syndicalisation of industrial concerns, the obligatory membership of the population in consumers' co-operative societies, and the dissolution of merchant combines. This programme took a stand against the abolition of



private property, and promised easier credits for the smaller capitalists. All in all, it was a programme aiming at the completion of a capitalist revolution in the 20th century. But already, as Kamenev had feared and Trotsky had promised, more advanced elements urged more. The total disorganisation of the productive process in the country made an attempt at economic enterprise by the State imperative. The unbalanced political situation following the War held out the false hope of a revolution in the West. The Bolsheviks were, against their own plans, obliged to reach forward to State ownership, and they adopted Trotsky's consequence, that the Russian Revolution could only be saved by a proletarian revolution in Western Europe. It was, to use Lenin's paraphrase, only the prologue for the near World Revolution. From 1918 to 1920, all the Bolshevik leaders were for the "spreading," or say "permanent," revolution, and the Communist International was a busy and hard-working organisation.

But already reality was asserting itself. The author traces in two incomparable chapters the rise, under the influence of the national economic needs of Russia, of a third period in Bolshevism, that of so-called "Socialism in Russia alone," the national-Russian Bolshevism of our day, which he finds much closer to the limited Russian programme of 1917 than to the international realignment of 1918.

The Bolsheviks, he concludes, are the executors of the testament of Peter the Great. To them has fallen the historic task of solving the backwardness of Russia. They are accomplishing this through the institution and development of State capitalism. Since 1917 Russia has been advancing, while the Communist International has been withering away. Bolshevism, which was progressive for Russia of the Czars, was found reactionary for industrial West Europe, where the capitalist revolution had long ago been completed and peasants were not the majority of the population.

The heroism of the Russian workers in the years of 1917-1920 has roused abroad the impression that Bolshevism was a form of the proletarian world revolution. A great number of European workers wanted to attain power in union with the Bolsheviks. Rosa Luxembourg and the Dutchman Gorter recognised the bourgeois character and what they described as the Jacobinism of Bolshevism, and they promptly disowned it. Many European workers and "intellectuals," however—the majority of whom the author classifies as "utopian radicals" as opposed to the grouping of Marxists—fancied that the Russian Revolution was a Socialist act, and wanted to follow the Bolshevik leadership, which, having "rearmed" itself with an internationalist programme, had retrieved the name "Communist" and formed

the Third International. But events showed the impossibility of such leadership by an agrarian State. So that, little by little, the Russian State and its foreign working-class supporters separated. The theory of "Socialism in one country" is merely the reflection of this separation. The isolated, national Russian Bolshevism is not even in the position to lead the national movements of the Asiatic peoples, as was shown in the case of China in 1926-27, let alone a revolution in the West.

The shadow of the great Russian Revolution still drags along a section of the international working class. Bolshevism, however, no longer wields an active influence among the workers of the world. The historic task of the Bolsheviks, says the author, was an immortal task, but the international capitalists are no longer afraid of Bolshevism. They have reason for fearing an international working-class movement. With that, however, affirms the author, Bolshevism is not identical.

Interesting is the discussion of the Soviet as an historic institution. The Russian popular council, an organ of expression for the spontaneous will of the masses, is foreign to Bolshevik theory, states the author. Having previously opposed the Soviet, in 1917 Lenin used the slogan "All power to the Soviets!"—when the popular, democratic Soviets were the real holders of power—in order to win the directorate and later to instal his own State apparatus, i.e., the rule of a small, disciplined minority of professional political workers over the great mass. The Bolsheviks came to employ the Soviets as the decorative symbol of their rule. And, such is the irony of history, that the term "Soviet," which in 1905 and 1917 stood for crude but the most radical democracy imaginable, has become known, through Bolshevik symbolism, as the name for the very opposite of democracy.

A somewhat similar alteration, he points out, transpired in the case of the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat." The Marxian phrase, as found in the "Criticism of the Gotha Programme" and "Civil War in France," denotes the dictatorship of the proletarian majority over the minority of capitalists, and is identical with majority rule. The Bolshevik State-form is the dictatorship of a party or a party apparatus over the proletariat and the rest of the population. Prophetically, Rosa Luxembourg wrote from her prison in 1918:—

"With the suppression of political life in the entire country must also come the gradual destruction of the Soviets. Without universal franchise, the liberty of the Press and assembly and the unhampered struggle of opinion, the life of every public institution withers away, and bureaucracy alone remains as the active element. This law is never contradicted. Little by little will your public life be lulled to sleep. A dozen party leaders,

full of inexhaustive energy and boundless idealism, will direct and govern. From time to time, a picked section of the workers will be invited to the meetings. There they will applaud the leaders' speeches and say 'Yes' to prepared resolutions. In other words, you will have the rule of a clique—not the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, but the dictatorship of a handful of politicians, i.e., a dictatorship in the bourgeois sense, a dictatorship in the manner of the Jacobins."

GERSOM,

Workers' Socialist Party (U.S.A.).

## Debate with a "Douglas Credit Association"

(NEW ZEALAND)

A debate was held in St. Andrew's Hall, New Lynn, on August 14th, on the question, "Which should the Workers support, Socialism or the Douglas Credit Proposals?"

Comrade Philips, for the Socialist Party of New Zealand, pointed out the inequalities of the present social system of capitalism and the urgent need for a change. He explained that the present depression merely accentuated the misery amongst the working class and that even in so-called prosperous times there is a large army of unemployed.

He traced machine development in industry and the evils caused by the private ownership of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth, and the need for the overthrow of capitalism and the emancipation of the workers through the introduction of Socialism.

He stressed the fact that the trouble to-day was not shortage of purchasing power, as claimed by the Douglas advocates, but the concentration of wealth in the hands of the master class; not that the banks controlled credit, but that the capitalists, through ownership of the forces of production, controlled the means of mankind's subsistence.

Colonel Closey, for the Douglas Credit Association, stated that he agreed that Socialism would come some day, but his conception of Socialism was purely Nationalisation of industry, and he claimed that the present system had proved itself capable of producing sufficient for the needs of the people, so it did not need abolition, but that amendment of the monetary system was imperative. He claimed that the depression was caused by the curtailment of credit by the banks, and stated that immediately their proposals were adopted relief would be obtained and the depression vanish.

Comrade Philips agreed that the present system meets present requirements in the field of production, but stated that our quarrel was with

the appropriation of the products. He showed that under Socialism, when production was according to a plan and for the use of the people as a whole, the volume would increase, with, on the other hand, more leisure for all. He pointed out that Nationalisation was not Socialism, but a form of capitalism.

He then dealt with the Douglas proposals and showed the fallacy of the claim that banks are able to create credit, and instanced the failure of numerous American banks which could not "create" sufficient credit to meet their own obligations and thus avoid collapse. He pointed out that the movement was not in the interests of the workers, but in the interests of a section of the master class, who were trying to capture the workers' support by the promise of higher wages and steady employment, and stressed the point that the proposals, if adopted, would not be a solution to the bondage which holds the workers, and that only by the total overthrow of the present order and the institution of Socialism would they be freed.

Colonel Closey admitted that if that was Socialism he had not previously understood Socialism—a remark which was confirmed by many present. He appealed for the aged, and solicited their support on the plea that Douglas Credit Proposals would give them something before they died. He asked for a trial of their plan, and, if it was not suitable, Socialism could then be striven for.

A large number of questions were put to our representative which were satisfactorily answered and brought more light on the futility of Douglas proposals and the necessity for the workers to unite to achieve Socialism.

A. HUMPHREY,

For National Executive,  
S.P.N.Z.

## This Month's Quotation

The passage quoted was written by William Lovett (1800-1877), and appears in "Life and Struggles of William Lovett" (Vol. I, p. 156, pub. by G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., 1920).

## HOW TO GET TO HEAD OFFICE.

Great Dover Street is a turning out of Borough High Street, near Borough (Underground) Station. The station is on the line from Morden to Hampstead and Highgate, and lies between the Bank Station and Elephant and Castle.

## WHY CAPITALISM WILL NOT COLLAPSE . . .

Owing to the continued demand for this pamphlet a further supply has been printed

Send your orders to—

Literature Secretary, 42 Great Dover Street, E.C.1  
16 pages 1d. (Post free 1½d.)



### Meeting of Party Speakers

A very well attended and successful meeting of Party propagandists was held at Head Office on Saturday, November 11th. The organiser, "Robertus," spoke at some length on problems facing speakers at outdoor meetings.

He said that, in his opinion, based on his experience extending over many years, it is a bad practice and harmful to the Party that speakers should be abusive to opponents. It should be remembered that opponents in organisations such as the Communist Party and I.L.P. are, generally speaking, just as sincere as are members of the Socialist Party, and just as certain that they are right. They are enthusiastic, and believe in the views they put forward, and should be treated accordingly and reasoned with accordingly.

There is a difference between indoor and outdoor speaking in that, with an indoor meeting, the subject can be dealt with at once. People have come there to listen to a set subject, and consequently the argument must be consecutive which presupposes considerable preparation beforehand. Outdoor meetings, on the other hand, are subject to interrupters, and must allow for the need to touch upon a number of different points; consequently the same tactics cannot be employed at outdoor meetings as indoors. That does not mean, however, that speakers at outdoor meetings need not prepare their material. Preparation is just as necessary, although the kind of subject may be different. One method suitable to outdoor meetings is to take a few current questions of topical interest and expound the Socialist view in relation to them.

Some young speakers find it difficult to speak for longer than, say, 15 minutes on a topic. If that is so, be content to speak for that period. Do not attempt to carry on for half an hour. No good is ever done by this.

In conclusion, the organiser said that he is convinced that the Party has within its ranks much good material, and he hoped his remarks would help towards increasing the number of effective propagandists for Socialism.

In the discussion which followed many points were put forward. The usefulness of outdoor meetings under present-day conditions was questioned by one speaker, who suggested that consideration should be given to alternative forms of activity, such as door-to-door canvassing and advertising. This was countered by a speaker who insisted that in outdoor meetings lies the strength of the Party.

It was pointed out that, at least in some areas, it is impossible to avoid controversy about other political parties, since members of the audience are interested in such questions and throw them up at the speaker as soon as the meeting begins.

Another member who spoke agreed that speakers must take the local situation as they find it, but would be well advised to keep off attacks on other organisations as far as possible. For the same reason as that put forward by the organiser, it is inadvisable to make a special point of attacking religion. It is far more useful to get the economic case for Socialism accepted by an individual and deal with his objections to the Socialist attitude towards religion afterwards.

Another point brought out in discussion was that at certain meeting places it is difficult to get an audience. This could never be achieved by putting the Socialist case. The only way is to attract attention by arranging for Party members to put questions to the speaker.

Another suggestion was that difficult stations should be closed down and attention concentrated on more fruitful areas.

The meeting passed two resolutions.

The first recommended the E.C. to appoint district organisers to assist the central organiser.

The second recommended the setting up of speakers' classes, at Head Office or elsewhere, under the supervision of the organiser.

It is intended to call further meetings to consider problems of propaganda, and the organiser will make arrangements and issue an announcement of the next meeting in due course.

### The Mouse Trap

"Even bourgeois Liberalism is pronounced Socialistic—Socialistic is popular education—Socialistic national financial reform. It was Socialistic to build a railroad where already a canal was; it was Socialistic to defend oneself with a stick when attacked with a sword."

So wrote Marx over 80 years ago, and the essentials of the social and political situation under capitalism having persisted, the words are as true to-day as when the coup d'état of the arch swindler, Napoleon III, called forth Marx's brilliant historical monograph, "The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte."

The crude acting of the political mountebanks of the later 18th and earlier 19th century has been largely replaced by a superior technique. Harry Quelch's summary of the Prime Minister as the "Monarch of wire-pullers" many years ago explains why a moulder of arid nothings is enabled to attain the giddy height of Chief Capitalist Catspaw.

But the political stage preserves its actors true to type. "Left wing" leaders still strut around, manifestoes in hand, "demanding" reforms which will be conceded, sooner or later, by the clearer-headed capitalists in the interest of the master class. The latest exhibition of this kind has been staged by "ten left-wing Socialists of long political experience." The play is entitled "Problems of a Socialist Government." Sir

Stafford Cripps bottoms the prologue of this most lamentable comedy, and, striking a manly breast, proclaims the necessity of the "fundamental Socialist principle of brotherhood" for the next "Socialist" Government (p. 13). Shades of Cain and Abel!

It is important to keep in mind that this book is practically a manifesto of the "Socialist League," one of the fragments into which the Independent Labour Party split. A few points will be sufficient to show that the "Socialist League," in spite of its dishonest insistence upon its "Socialism," is the same old I.L.P. (shorn to some extent of the fantastical trappings of anarchy which still adorn the present I.L.P. and Communist Party).

Sir Charles Trevelyan holds that the Leicester Conference has put "the leaders . . . of the Labour Party under a definite mandate to introduce Socialist measures." And the "measures"? Sir Charles is doubtful whether the "land, the banks or the mines . . . must be taken over first by the nation" (p. 27). The late E. F. Wise was anxious about the security of the banks: "The Socialist State . . . will need a steady supply of savings and new CAPITAL, which it will put to socially profitable use." We commend this statement for earnest thought to members of the Socialist League who claim acquaintance with and acquiescence in the economic basis of Socialism. Incidentally, he was in favour of "compensation." "Compensation to former shareholders would have to be paid" (p. 79). There is unanimity on "compensation." Sir Christopher Addison, Agricultural Minister in the late Labour Government, is in favour of "terminable annuities for a limited number of years . . . on the present basis of rents" (p. 239). Careless reading might interpret: "There is no way out of the present impasse except by national ownership" as a pronouncement in favour of "Land Nationalisation." But even this variation of the Single Tax nostrum is too wildly revolutionary for this left-winger. He simply proposes taking over "all agricultural land." And, "above all," we must not be "subject to cold feet and frightened of our job" (p. 250). And to prove our valour, this shining light of the Valiant Ten will, among other things, seek emergency powers to "fix fair prices" (p. 235). In short, he will do his damndest to continue the life of the present capitalist system as much as the "vain hypochondriac whom they are content to accept as their leader" (p. 250). Did it take this Right Honourable Gentleman the loss of a job to discover the moral defects of his former leader?

Wm. Mellor (ex-Editor of the *Daily Herald*) writes on "The Claim of the Unemployed." This gentleman is not so happy in the economic field as when engaged in obtaining tipsters for

the Derby and Cæsarewitch, supplying information to the anxious miner and factory girl as to how best to invest their "savings," and to the recipient of the dole the comparative virtues of gilt-edged and Courtaulds!

Reforms such as "raising the school age," "slum clearance," "development of agriculture," etc., etc. (all, or the majority of which, have been advocated by the "orthodox" political parties) are advanced by this roaring sucking dove ("Weaker brethren may quail at what this may entail"! ). And one outcome? Stand firmly! Take breath!! "The new scale would raise the income of this family" (man, wife, and two children) "to £2 A WEEK" (p. 121).

Ring down the curtain. These be players that, not having the accent of Socialists, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of Nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well. What do you call the play? Another Mouse Trap for the working class—a knavish piece of work.

A. REGINALD.

### NOTICES OF MEETINGS & LECTURES

All meetings are open to non-members, admission free. Questions and discussion are welcomed.

**HEAD OFFICE**, 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Sunday evenings at 8 p.m. Jan. 7th, "Parliament and the Revolutionary Object of the S.P.G.B.," A. Jacobs. Jan. 14th, "Socialism and the Meantime," Sandy. Jan. 21st, "Science and Society," D. Goldberg. Jan. 28th, "What Socialism means to the Workers," R. Ambridge.

**BLOOMSBURY**, A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street (corner of Guilford Street), W. C. 1. Friday evenings at 8.30 p.m. Jan. 5th, "Parliament Versus Direct Action," A. Jacobs. Jan. 12th, "Some Political Aspects of the French Revolution," M. Baritz. Jan. 19th, "Socialism is Inevitable," A. Kohn. Jan. 26th, "Imperialism," S. Stewart.

**DAGENHAM**, At Romford N.U.R. Institute, Albert Rd., Monday, January 15th at 8 p.m., "The Principles of the Socialist Party," W. Waters. Monday, January 22nd, at 8 p.m., "Socialism and Religion," F. Johnson.

**HACKNEY**, Lectures at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Valette Street, Mare Street, E.8., at 8 p.m. Tuesday, January 2nd, "Dictatorship," Isbitsky. January 9th, "The French Revolution," Snelgrove. January 16th, "Science and Socialism," Uttin. Jan. 23rd, "The State and Revolution," Hatwell. January 30th, subject and speaker to be announced.

### BETHNAL GREEN

A meeting will be held at BETHNAL GREEN LIBRARY, Cambridge Road, E., on Friday, January 19th, at 7.30 p.m. For particulars see local notices.

### WHITECHAPEL

A meeting will be held on Friday, January 5th, at 7.30 p.m., at WHITECHAPEL LIBRARY, WHITECHAPEL ROAD, E.1.

"Psychology" - - - Cameron

### TEA AND SOCIAL AT HEAD OFFICE

There will be a Tea and Social at Head Office on Saturday, January 6th, at 6.30 p.m. Members and friends invited.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JANUARY,



1934

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable. The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

## TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Twelve Months, post free .. .. 2s. 6d.  
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## Our New Year Message

Another year has gone by and a fresh one is commencing. How are things with us, and what are the prospects?

To begin with, there are two things that are worth a comment. The suspension of the *Social Democrat* (organ of the Social Democratic Federation) a few weeks ago brings to light the fact that the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* is the only one left of the group of journals that claimed to appeal particularly to workers in 1904. The others have either ceased publication, changed their names, or only appear fitfully. A similar process has also been at work with the organisations the journals represented. So true is this, that were we to reprint our first Manifesto, which contains references to these groups and journals, it would be like a voice from another planet to the workers of the present generation.

It is useful to record these two points, because those of our readers who were alive and interested in the working-class movement 30 years ago will remember that the formation of the Socialist Party was greeted with contempt and anger as a splitting movement by a group of youthful upstarts. We were promised a speedy death. But we still live, and we flourish without the aid of trickery, trumpery or trumpets.

The fact that we flourish, however, is not really a matter for great congratulation. We ought and might have expected to be progressing far better than we are doing. The case we put forward is simple and it appeals directly to the interests of all who depend for their existence upon the sale of their mental and physical energies—members of the working class.

But, although the majority of workers are moving our way, they are only slowly doing so, with the result that the energies and the finances of members are severely taxed in the work of meeting the needs of the Party.

There are many sympathisers with the Party who would make useful members if they would only make up their minds to join. We only refer, of course, to those who understand and accept our principles, and there are many such who are regular readers of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*. We need the assistance, with hands, brains and funds, of all who agree with our position and are prepared to act in harmony with it. We are not philanthropists nor self-seekers. We are working men and women, who are organised together to change the basis of the social system in order that we may reap the full benefit of associated labour.

We have occasionally to appeal for funds. We do not like doing so, and we ought not to have to. Those who sympathise with the Party should know that our own slender means are not sufficient for the work that is to be done. We want to get information into the hands of as many workers as possible, and consequently we must charge as low as possible for our publications, which means that we cannot normally expect any income from them. The most we can expect is to cover a large part of the printing expenses. We ought to be able to publish quantities of simple leaflets for free distribution, but at present this is quite beyond our financial capacities.

When it is remembered that no part of the Party's work, apart from the keeping in order of the head office, is paid for, and that consequently a huge amount of work has to be done by members after working hours, sympathisers will understand how badly we need their aid in spreading knowledge of the working-class position.

Lest the foregoing should be misunderstood, there is one point we would particularly emphasise. No sympathisers should think of joining the Party unless convinced they understand and appreciate our attitude. A careful reading of all our literature will save them from joining under a misapprehension. It is no help to the Party for people to join up, and after a few months go out again. We do not offer fireworks or Bohemian companionship. We only offer working comradeship in the struggle for Socialism.

During the year that has just ended we have held an unusually large number of well-attended indoor meetings. This kind of activity is an excellent means of giving expression to the Socialist view on all kinds of matters, and of helping to thresh out the difficulties of prospective members. We want to see it considerably expanded.

We have published a revised edition of our pamphlet, "Socialism," nearly five thousand of

which have already been sold. The publication of further pamphlets is under consideration, and we hope to have at least one out shortly.

Conditions are slowly forcing the workers towards our outlook, and although our numbers are still small our influence is growing steadily. One by one the reeds the workers lean on are breaking, and in time they will learn the futility of "immediate remedies" and the hollowness of all pretensions to leadership. We can only hasten this knowledge by propaganda; there is no quicker way.

To those who tend to weary of the struggle, we would point to the fact that the mass of the workers, in spite of their apparent indifference, are vastly nearer a Socialist outlook than they were when the first number of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* appeared. It is well to remember that the great majority of people move in a mass, and when they come over to the Socialist view they will do so more or less about the same time. Here and there, through some fortunate turn of circumstances or surroundings, an individual becomes conscious of his or her position and hence gets ahead of the mass. It is in this way that an organisation is formed and struggles slowly on, gathering numbers and knowledge and preparing the way for the majority who will bring the movement to its final objective. This preparatory work may seem hard and thankless, but its victorious culmination is certain—there is no mistake about that.

Our New Year Message, therefore, is the same as of yore. Unless you are satisfied to remain just a beast of burden, join with us in the struggle

that is worth while—the struggle for free access to the wealth of this fruitful earth.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

## Words and Men

(Continued.)

As the old aristocracy merged into the titled bourgeoisie, literary form and substance gradually extended to comprehend more and more of the interests of the bourgeoisie. The growth of the physical sciences was reflected in the increasing use of prose and its extreme virility and terseness. The firm establishment of individualistic society produced the novel as an accepted and popular art-form. The need of commercial society to know the happenings of its different sections and localities called into being the regular news-sheets, and we have the beginnings of journalism. Daniel Defoe, a class-conscious bourgeois, has been called the first English novelist and the first journalist. Though he slightly preceded the first regular periodicals, he was a prolific and imaginative pamphleteer and one of the first to issue graphic topical accounts of spectacular events. His Robinson Crusoe (1719), directly descended from the Elizabethan narratives of authentic voyages, is a masterpiece of homely and convincing detail and the first outstanding landmark on the road to realism.

Defoe, Swift, Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, Austen, Thackeray, Dickens—the genealogy is plain.

Pope, who applied flawlessly classical tech-



nique to topical and even trivial subjects, represents both the culmination and the collapse of aristocratic poetry. Steele and Addison, elegantly witty essayists, supplied the popular demand for news and culture; all their *Tatler* and *Spectator* articles show clearly the steady growth of detailed realistic description, always, of course, of bourgeois households and habits. Both were recognised leaders of literature, and it is significant that both also held high political office. Johnson followed them with similar forms, but more widespread knowledge.

The master-stylist, however, of this—or perhaps of any—age is Swift, whose terse, bare, virile language clothes with forceful economy his scalding invectives on human society. He saw the deficiencies and evils of social life without in the least understanding their cause. His best-known work is *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), a satirical romance which commonly fails of the appreciation it deserves; no one who delights in social criticism couched in superb language can afford to miss it. A lesser work, *The Modest Proposal*, is a vitriolic pamphlet which for irony has never been surpassed.

Swift's passionate outcry against man's claim to be a reasonable being itself demonstrates the extensive sway of the cult of "Reason" at this time. For the best examples of this cult we must turn again to France, where the forces of incipient capitalism straining at the leash of feudal institutions were producing ideas of revolt. Commercial production was dammed up; the capitalists were becoming more and more conscious of the need to attain power; and a revolutionary literature was thrown up by the political and economic aspirations of the would-be dominant class. Those embryonic theories of Liberty, Justice, Reason and Universal Science, which were proclaimed during the Renaissance, were now brought down to earth, and exemplified by reference to everyday experience. The symbol *par excellence* of feudal conservatism and repression being Holy Mother Church, the struggling capitalists directed much of their energies full tilt against that "infamous" institution. A weapon lay ready to their hand: the struggles of the English capitalists had also been aimed largely at Catholicism, and criticism had gone beyond Puritanism: it had produced the elements of materialism in the writings of Bacon, Hobbes and Locke.

The rebellious thinkers and writers of eighteenth century France seized upon this rudimentary materialism and used it to express the discontent with current social organisation which was then rife. The chief body of theory and discussion of this time appeared in the *Encyclopædia*, but the best known single figures of the period are Voltaire and Rousseau, two men who expressed similar class aspirations with

a wealth of difference. Voltaire, "as artful as a monkey, as cruel as a cat," virulent enemy of the Church and passionate upholder of "justice" as against aristocratic class-dominance, was yet conservative and whole-heartedly despised the lower orders. "The people must not be educated," he declared; he would have had society a "benevolent despotism," corresponding with his deistic idea of the universe. His snappy, sarcastic style, his apt retorts and comments have made his name a byword for witty denunciation.

The *Encyclopædists*, however, offer the most comprehensive view of the intellectual ferment in France during the 50 years before the Revolution. The *Encyclopædia*, 1751-1780, corresponded roughly to the now firmly established news-sheets in England. Conceived and largely executed by Diderot, it was to be a complete survey and interpretation of the whole of human knowledge. It contained full technical information, with engravings, on a wide range of subjects, but its particular value lay in its incessant propaganda for materialism and the "Rights of Man." Locke's Sensationalism ("There is nothing in the mind which was not previously in the senses") and the Natural Man theory were either openly discussed and demonstrated or else skilfully woven into articles on quite alien subjects. The theory that man in himself is a kindly and reasonable creature but that he has been corrupted and warped by evil social institutions was valuable in spite of its limitations. Its supporters maintained that men are not individually responsible for their characters, and that men and their actions are formed by the circumstances in which they live; change those circumstances and men will react accordingly. So far, so good. But the theory in essence assumes a "natural man," a state of grace or Golden Age from which man has departed; it is thus quite unhistorical and foredoomed to inconsistency and sentimentalism. Nevertheless, it was an important step towards historical understanding.

The *Encyclopædia* attracted enormous attention. Many copies were confiscated; contributors and printers were imprisoned, but it continued to appear, and to captivate all thinking persons with its indomitable common sense. Diderot himself must have special notice, for he epitomises every tendency of importance in that age. He went further than Voltaire himself in religious criticism, for there is sufficient evidence to warrant the belief that he was a thorough-going atheist; he was the first to attempt "realist" or bourgeois drama, thus paving the way for Beaumarchais' *Figaro* (1775 and 1784); he was the first to write a full-length novel with a propagandist purpose; his celebrated art-criticisms, while not always sound, are always intelligent and stimulating; and from him Rousseau directly and

admittedly derived his most celebrated theories. He swam perpetually on the crest of the intellectual wave, and in a flash here and there overtopped his times by almost a century; but his work is scrappy, often difficult to trace, and overlaid with that lip-service to orthodoxy which was often the only road to publication. Engels refers to his "Rameau's Nephew" (a conversation leaping from topic to topic over a wide range) as a "master-piece of dialectic," and it is worth remarking that Rousseau's "Origins of Inequality," which Engels mentions in the same breath, was written at Diderot's suggestion and to his plan.

Rousseau adopted the idea of man's perversion by corrupt institutions and gave it poetical, even voluptuous, expression. He became the seer and visionary of the coming order, the lion of a thousand banquets. His luscious style, his overflowing emotionalism, brought to his feet legions of admirers whom the logic and argument of the intellectuals had failed to stir. "Julie" (1761), a novel in the manner of Richardson's "Pamela," enjoyed unprecedented popularity, becoming the rage of court and city immediately on publication. It is almost entirely concerned with man's natural goodness of heart and his susceptibility to sweet reason.

In England, meanwhile, the novel had emerged fully fledged from the hands of Richardson, who describes with loving detail the day-by-day existence of well-to-do families. Fielding, who began by parodying Richardson and ended as ardent a novel-writer as the man he jibed at, made the novel lighter, shorter, more selective. Smollett did not confine himself to the leisured class, but introduced "low life" and "robustious" humour.

Poetry now was inclining towards the romantic school. The Industrial Revolution was getting under way, and the growing complexity and sordidness of life were producing the beginnings of a reaction. A "back to Nature" movement—connected to some extent with Rousseauism and the Noble-Savage-Golden-Age theory—became increasingly popular; Thomson, Collins and Gray foreshadow it; Cooper, and especially Burns, give it frank and full expression. With the turn of the century the return to Nature is in full career in the writings of Wordsworth and Coleridge, and the Romantic movement is well under way.

At the very core of Romanticism lies the desire to escape from reality; as the real world becomes grimmer and more squalid, sensitive men seek refuge in dream worlds of varying kinds. Sometimes they wish simply to return to the country life of their parents; sometimes past history, more or less remote, takes on a glamorous enchantment for them; sometimes they turn to exaggeratedly colourful painting or to eccentric clothes. The English Poetic Romantics were Byron, Shelley and Keats, all full of haunting phrases

and pitiful despair; the content of their work is wholly emotional. To the Romantic, thought is a weary burden which only lands him in self-hatred.

In prose Romanticism was less extreme. The link between eighteenth and nineteenth century novels is Jane Austen, whose minute attention to apparently useless detail belongs essentially to the realists, but whose determined refusal to mention the existence of any sort of social problem, at the time of the Combination Laws, The Six Acts, and the Luddite Riots, places her emotionally with the Romantics. Chief of English Romantic novelists was Scott, whose influence was greater on the Continent than here.

After the French Revolution events moved swiftly. Economic development proceeded apace, and literature did not lag behind. As France began to catch up with England industrially, her literature showed similar tendencies to ours; her tardy beginning meant increased pace, and we find the swing from realism to romance much more hotly discussed and carried to far more fantastic extremes in France than in England. Moreover, the promise of the "Reason" cult was not fulfilled. The new society proved no more reasonable than the old. An extremely violent reaction against classicism and philosophy set in; this linked up at once with romantic influences from England. Scott was much translated and enjoyed a great vogue in France.

History, or rather very pseudo-history, became the fashion with the picturesque and soulful dramas of Victor Hugo, such as "Hernani" and "Ruy Blas." The poetry of Lamartine is bathed in melodious tears for the rapid flight of time and the vanity of human wishes. De Musset and De Vigny have more vigour, but the one despises himself and the other hates life, both natural and social; and neither has any very practical solution to their problem of unbearable existence. In short, the French Romantics are a miserable band, broken upon the wheel of advancing capitalism without any conception of what is happening to them save that they are crushed and bleeding and do not know how to escape.

STEWART.

(To be concluded.)

#### Trade Union Branches

The Socialist Party of Great Britain is prepared to consider applications from Trade Unions and other organisations for a representative to state the case for Socialism. Travelling expenses only are required.

#### INDEX to "SOCIALIST STANDARD"

A full index to the "Socialist Standard" for the year September, 1932 to August, 1933, has been prepared and printed. It will be supplied at 1d. per copy (11d. post free). Send your order at once to Literature Secretary, 43 Great Dover Street, S.E. 1, or apply to local branch.



## Notes by the Way

### "Our" Post Office Fights "Our" Trams

There is nothing like a hard fact to shatter a fallacious theory. Much ink has been wasted by the Labour Party to prove that the State-run Post Office is "our" Post Office, and that the Municipal trams are "our" trams, and that they are not merely institutions from which private investors draw a secure income.

Now, we have an intriguing case coming into court which centres round a claim by the Post Office for £20,000 damages against various local authorities, and companies which run tramways. The ground of the claim is that the tramway systems cause damage to the telephone cables.

If the Post Office and the Municipal trams were socially owned and operated, that is, operated simply to serve the needs of the whole population, and not in order to provide income on investments, it would be unthinkable that one body should present claims against the other.

Not the woolly speeches of Labour Party supporters, but the law case, represents the real nature of these State capitalist concerns.

### Was Marx a Marxist?

Mr. J. Middleton Murry recently added to the existing confusion by an article called the "Regeneration of Socialism" (*Post*, Sept. 2nd, 1933). In it he put forward the atrocious argument that the cure for perversions of scientific Socialism is to revert to Utopianism. A correspondent pointed out that this is like saying that the remedy for unskilful surgery is to give up all attempt at surgical training. As this correspondent said: "The remedy for 'perverted' scientific Socialism is more science, not less."

Another piece of Mr. Murry's logic was the following:—

Marx is said to have thanked God he was not a Marxist; by which he meant that he was something more than a "scientific" Socialist.

Mr. Murry was asked where and on what occasion Marx made this statement, and on what evidence Mr. Murry deduced that Marx meant that he was something more than a scientific Socialist.

Mr. Murry did not come forward with the evidence.

### M. Herriot's Unwanted Bouquet

M. Herriot, the French Radical politician, recently visited Russia; and told in interviews and speeches what he thought of the things he saw. Having been there before, in 1922, he was able to make comparisons, much to the advantage of the

present situation. The Bolshevik Press was delighted with the flattering things he said, and has given much publicity to his speeches, not forgetting, however, to do a little judicious suppression.

Thus the *Monthly Review* of the Moscow Narodny Bank (London, October) is able to devote nearly two whole pages to M. Herriot's remarks, but did not find room for the following:—

M. Herriot praised Stalin for his wisdom and courage in pronouncing his famous six conditions at the end of 1931, whereby wages are paid in relation to production; responsibility and skill are rewarded more generously, and in other respects, some of the tried capitalistic methods for increasing production have been adopted.

(M. Herriot in an interview. Reported in *Daily Express*, September 4th, 1933.)

### The "Revolutionary" I.L.P.—Strange Reticence at Kilmarnock

During the past two years the I.L.P. has moved rapidly—first out of the Labour Party which it helped to form, and then into an alliance with the Communist Party of Great Britain. But movement need not be movement in any particular direction and, accordingly, we find that the I.L.P. still continues its 40-year tradition of soliciting votes on a programme of reforms. In 1929 we called attention to the "Great Socialist Victory" won by Miss Jennie Lee in North Lanark on a programme which conspicuously avoided any mention whatever of Socialism. The I.L.P. candidate at Kilmarnock tried to repeat her performance, but was not successful.

He (Mr. John Pollock) and the Reverend James Barr—who stood for the I.L.P. and Labour Party reformist programmes respectively—were beaten by a third "Socialist," Mr. Lindsay, who belongs to the MacDonald Labour Group.

Mr. Pollock's election address was half taken up with wage reductions and the Means Test. It made no direct reference to Socialism except that it ended with the statement that the candidate appealed "as a life-long co-operator, Trade Unionist and Socialist." To the extent that it did attempt to deal with capitalism it contained absurdities such as "capitalism is breaking down."

Messrs. Maxton, Buchanan and McGovern issued a special message in support of Mr. Pollock, assuring the electors, among other things, that the I.L.P. group in Parliament has never failed at any time "in the matter of keeping Scottish questions to the front." Yet Mr. Pollock, in his address, ridiculed the idea that working-class problems are national ones. The special message also contained no reference whatever to Socialism.

Not only did Hannen Swaffer, in the *Daily*

*Herald* (Nov. 7th), say that "Pollock and Barr might almost have written each other's election address, so similar were their pledges," but also we had the *Liberal Manchester Guardian* jeering at the "tame manifesto" of Messrs. Maxton, Buchanan and McGovern on the ground that it forgot to mention Socialism; and the *Liberal News Chronicle* doing the same.

Although the Communists supported Pollock at Kilmarnock, a few weeks earlier, when the Communists ran a candidate at Clay Cross, the N.A.C. of the I.L.P. decided by 10 votes to 2 that no member of the I.L.P. should support him—a curious interpretation of the so-called United Front (see *Forward*, Nov. 11th).

### Revolutionary Rowing Colours

While we are on the subject of I.L.P. vote-catching we ought not to forget Dr. C. A. Smith. He recently wrote an open letter attacking Mr. Arthur Henderson for supporting the war and opposing the selection of pacifists as Labour Party election candidates (*New Leader*, Aug. 25th).

As recently as February, 1932, Dr. C. A. Smith ran as I.L.P. candidate in the New Forest division. His election address (which is full of a hotch-potch of I.L.P. reforms, from family allowances to "scientific marketing") has on its front page a photo of Dr. Smith, flanked by a brief biographical sketch. Dr. Smith, who denounces Henderson for being a war-monger, is not unaware of the value of a war-monger's record for the purpose of vote-catching.

So the biographical sketch lets you know that although Dr. Smith is "now a pacifist," he "served 2½ years as a private during the Great War on the Western Front, refusing to accept a commission," and that he was awarded the Military Medal for bravery under heavy fire. Dr. Smith was also, we learn, "elected College President and awarded rowing colours."

All of these things, no doubt, help the I.L.P. to capture votes, and it is hard to see how Dr. Smith's attitude of catching votes from every quarter differs from Mr. Henderson's.

### A Tragedy of "Co-operation"

Mrs. Eleanor Barton, J.P., General Secretary of the Womens' Co-operative Guild, is reported by *Reynolds's* as saying about war: "Don't let us have a repetition of the ironical tragedy of the last war, when Turks shot our young men with English rifles."

It is certainly an interesting comment on the way capitalists seek profits beyond national frontiers, but is it really more tragic for English and Turkish young men to be killed by English-made guns than by Turkish ones?

Is it any more tragic than the so-called co-operative movement, which claims to be international, lining up with the different capitalist Governments in the last war? giving support to recruiting and armament making, and investing funds in war loans?

### Parcels for Paradise

Those who imagine that Russian State-controlled capitalism has solved the poverty problem had better ask themselves why Russian Government agencies are advertising in English newspapers (e.g., *Manchester Guardian* and *Forward*) inviting people who have relatives and friends in Russia to arrange to supply them with parcels of food, clothing and footwear.

The advertisement in *Forward* (November 25th) explains the arrangement. If English or other non-Russian currency is paid into various English banks to be credited to the account of the Russian State agency, "Torgsin," parcels of food, clothing, etc., will be supplied in Russia to the individuals named by the person who pays in the money. The food is not imported into Russia, but is there already, but, as in other capitalist countries, it is available only to those who have money to pay for it. The advertisement is an admission by the Russian Government that there are people in Russia whose need of food, clothing, boots, etc., is not being adequately met.

The interest of the Russian Government in the matter is that they need foreign currencies to meet their obligations.

### How Dictators Get Things Done

The advocates of the supposed merits of dictators harp continually on their ability to get things done for the workers. We are told how they cut red tape, and act instead of talking, and how much better it is to have a dictator than for the workers to do something for themselves.

One of the dictators who is supposed to have been very successful in this way is Marshall Pilsudski, of Poland. (However, in his case the non-reporting of his speeches is said to be not so much due to his being "a strong, silent man" as to the fact that his language is often so filled with violent oaths and abuse of his opponents that English newspapers dare not print what he says.)

He has had undisputed authority for about seven years. Time enough, one would have thought, for a dictator to clear up at least the worst evils of working-class life. Yet we read the following in the *Daily Express* (December 7th),



from an account of what their correspondent saw in Warsaw, and other towns:—

"Whole families, often numbering twelve people, from the age of six up to seventy, working under the most insanitary conditions, in dirty, unventilated rooms—working fourteen to sixteen hours a day, and living on dry bread and water.

"For making a suit a family of workers receives 1s. 4d., the average daily earnings of a family being 2s. Making a pair of trousers brings 2d.

"Young girls with dark, brilliant eyes and bloodless lips are glad to get a penny for making a shirt.

"They are glad to get such a price, because they are all working under acute competition from starving neighbours.

"Children no more than six years old are awakened at four o'clock in the frosty winter mornings to begin sewing buttons and taking out stitches.

"Near midnight I found the same children still working by the gloomy light of petrol lamps."

We also read from a "British United Press" message (*Daily Herald*, December 15th) that unemployment in Italy was 1,066,215 at the end of November, representing an increase of 103,347 over the previous month.

In Germany Hitler has found a new piece of bluff to hoodwink the workers, that is, the compulsory one-course meal one day each month. The whole population is expected to give the money they save by this means towards the relief of the unemployed. This stunt has been hailed as a masterpiece of wisdom and kindness by millions, even of Hitler's opponents.

The *News-Chronicle* (December 18th) states that, so far (in a period of several months), £6 million has been raised in this way. It looks a large sum, but has, in fact, been distributed to 15 million persons in distress—8s. per head, perhaps about 1s. a week per person.

These are the baubles with which workers lacking Socialist knowledge can be distracted from things that matter.

\* \* \*

### More Adulteration of Food

According to the *Manchester Guardian* (December 9th) the annual report published by the Ministry of Health discloses an increase in food adulteration.

The percentage of samples found to be adulterated, or not up to standard, was 5.1 of those examined in 1932, as compared with only 4.6% and 4.8% in the two previous years.

The milk examined in 893 farms which had already been found to be supplying defective milk, was below standard in 368 cases, or 41.2%.

A sample of wine of "port type" was composed of water, sugar, tartaric acid and colouring matter.

\* \* \*

### Capitalist Joke

A joke published recently in a paper in South-eastern Europe touches the spot, and shows up the extent to which commercialism has made

a fine art of faking and falsifying, so that nobody any longer dare believe that anything is what it seems.

A small girl is shown assuring her mother that some article she has bought is good—"because it says so on the label!"

H.

## The Shorter Working Week in Australia

HAVE WE MISREPRESENTED THE COMMUNISTS?

A correspondent, writing from a London address, sent us the following letter referring to an article by an Australian Comrade, published in the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* for October. Being unable to obtain in London a copy of the Australian pamphlet, "The Communist Way Out of the Crisis," we have held up the letter until a copy of the pamphlet could be obtained from Melbourne. The letter and our reply are given below.

The Editor, *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Forest Hill, S.E.23, October 3rd, 1933.

"Shorter Working Week in Australia."

Dear Comrade,

As a native of Australia, resident in London only a few months, may I be permitted to correct what is obviously a false impression that is conveyed in your Melbourne correspondent's contribution, "The Shorter Working Week in Australia," appearing in your October issue?

Your correspondent refers to "the shallowness of the Communist Party's economics" in regard to what is stated to be an excerpt of a C.P. pamphlet entitled "The Communist Way Out of the Crises."

I recollect this quotation which, as a matter of fact, refers to C.P. policy and is taken from a pamphlet issued in connection with the Federal General Election held at the latter end of 1931. (In this election the Communist Party Senate candidate—Comrade Sharkey—polled not less than 13,500 votes.)

The inference conveyed in your quotation, however, leads the reader to assume that the "seven-hour day and five-day week" was the Communist's way out of the crisis, *under capitalism*. This is totally erroneous. The pamphlet stated clearly and plainly that there was only one way out for the workers—the revolutionary way. The pamphlet also set out a tentative policy for economic reconstruction in Australia *after the workers had taken control*, one of which was that quoted by your correspondent.

Thus it will be seen that your correspondent is both unfair, and, I don't hesitate to add, unscrupulous, in his methods of criticism, as I am convinced that this is a wilful distortion.

In the historical period through which we are now passing, it behoves all class-conscious elements and working-class parties to struggle valiantly together shoulder to shoulder—in fact it is imperative. The tactics of Comrade W. J. Clarke will hardly assist in the desired direction.

With fraternal greetings,  
(Mrs.) M. RICHARDSON.

Reply.

In order that the question at issue shall be made quite clear, we reproduce below the passage, criticised by our correspondent, which appeared in the October *SOCIALIST STANDARD*:—

"... The Australian Trade Union Congress carried resolutions calling upon workers to organise to bring about a reduction in hours so that unemployment might be decreased. Recently the workers in

Queensland applied to the State authorities for a forty-hour week.

"In addition to the above the Communists have been agitating for a thirty-hour week of five days. In a pamphlet issued by the Communist Party of Australia, in 1931, entitled 'The Communist Way Out of the Crises,' we find the following:—

"By introducing the seven-hour day and the five-day week, and by raising the purchasing power of the masses, we will abolish unemployment." (Page 6.)

"The shallowness of the Communist Party's economics is revealed here: even the Trades Union Congress did not propose to abolish unemployment with its thirty-hour week."

Now let us examine the points of our correspondent's criticism.

The first is that an examination of the pamphlet shows that the passage was quoted correctly. (Mrs. Richardson's letter does not deny this.)

The second is that Mrs. Richardson is wrong in her assertion that the article and quotation in the October *SOCIALIST STANDARD* convey a false inference. The Australian Communists claimed (as can be seen from the quotation) that they would abolish unemployment "by introducing the seven-hour day and the five-day week, and by raising the purchasing power of the masses." Our Australian Comrade who wrote the article criticised the proposal and said that it showed the shallowness of the Communist Party's economics. He did not base his criticism on the assumption that the proposal was to be applied before the Communists had taken control, but simply on the proposal itself.

Mrs. Richardson tries to establish her case by saying that this proposal is not intended "under capitalism," but "after the workers had taken control." She overlooks the very important point that, according to the pamphlet, capitalism would still exist after the Australian Communist Party had taken control. The pamphlet promises that after the Communist Party have taken control "production and distribution of wealth will be socialised progressively, until all class divisions will disappear..." (p. 7). But before this "progressive" programme is carried out certain things are to be done *immediately*. Thus the pamphlet tells us on page 5: "We shall at once throw off the tremendous burden of interest payments..." (italics ours). Among the things the Communists promise to do in this intervening period prior to "progressive socialisation" (whatever that may mean), is the abolition of unemployment by means of shorter hours and "raising the purchasing power of the masses."

Mrs. Richardson herself remembers that the proposal to abolish unemployment is promised as a measure to be applied before "progressive socialisation" takes place, as indicated in her phrase, "The pamphlet also set out a tentative policy for economic reconstruction... one of which was that quoted by your correspondent"

(italics ours). What Mrs. Richardson fails to realise is that this admission on her part completely destroys the basis of her criticism. The "tentative policy," including the abolition of unemployment, is to be carried out at once, and in advance of "progressive socialisation"—in other words, while capitalism is still in being.

The pamphlet clearly indicates that wages, banking, money, compensation for small bondholders, and "payment for rent, gas, water, electricity, etc.," speculation, and numerous other features which could only exist under capitalism will still be there at this stage when the tentative policy of abolishing unemployment is promised to be carried out.

In short, the Australian Communist Party are offering to abolish unemployment after they have gained power, but before they have abolished capitalism. It was precisely on that ground that our Australian Comrade denounced the shallowness of their economics.

It is worth mentioning that the English Communists are every bit as shallow as their Australian brethren. Mr. Harry Pollitt stood as official Communist Party candidate at Clay Cross in September, 1933. His election paper, "Pollitt's Election Special," has, under the heading "Immediate demands," the following:—

"The seven-hour day alone would compel the re-employment of 100,000 miners, and would provide more regular working time for those at present on short time."

His election address similarly has, under the heading "Immediate demands," "Seven-hour day for all miners, which will absorb thousands of unemployed!"

Before concluding we cannot refrain from commenting on Mrs. Richardson's last paragraph but one.

She assures us that our Australian Comrade was "both unfair and, I don't hesitate to add, unscrupulous..." as I am convinced that this was a wilful distortion.

May we suggest to Mrs. Richardson: (1) That it is unsafe to rely on distant memories when making charges of inaccuracy; (2) that others besides herself may make mistakes without necessarily being guilty of deliberate fabrication; and (3) that she certainly ought to hesitate before charging anyone with unscrupulousness and wilful distortion, when she not only has not a tittle of evidence on which to base her assumption that a supposed mistake was deliberate, but also has no other evidence for her assumption that a mistake has been made at all except a distant—and, as it turns out—faulty recollection of something she read.

If it were desirable or practicable for Communists and Socialists to co-operate (which it is not) we do not think Mrs. Richardson's impetuous charges of wilful distortion would help.

ED. COMM.



## Answers to Correspondents

*E. Wright (S.E.5).*

When there is a Socialist majority they will use control of the political machinery to dispossess all sections of the capitalist class (including the bankers), and will make the means of production and distribution the property of society as a whole. Goods will then be produced not for sale and profit-making, but for use. You tell us that if your scheme is adopted by the Socialist majority after they have gained control of the machinery of Government, they will be enabled "To see that all new money is either given to the workers or used to finance State-owned industries producing goods for use and not for profit." We have asked you several times before how, after introducing production for use, and thus abolishing the need for money, society could go on having money, banks, and other financial institutions, rendered unnecessary by the abolition of capitalism. When you have answered this question we shall be pleased to tell you what we think of your scheme. ED. COMM.

*Other Correspondents.*

Several replies are held over, and will be dealt with in due course. ED. COMM.

### THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.)

Readers in U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party at 192, East 23rd Street, New York City, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

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**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.

**BIRKENHEAD.**—Communications to H. Dawson, 26, Vulcan Street, Birkenhead, Cheshire.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.**—Secretary, M. Sandy, 269, Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1. Branch meets every Friday at 7.30 p.m. at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road).

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**DAGENHAM.**—Branch meets alternate Mondays (from December 11th) at 8 p.m., Pettits' Farm, Heathway. Sec. J. Pegman, 67, Maxey Road, Dagenham, Essex.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to J. Strickett, 5, Ely Terrace, E.1. Branch meets every Friday, at 8 p.m. at 141, Bow Road, E.3.

**ECCLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at small ante-room, Co-op. Hall, Peel Street, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. LEA, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Lancs.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month, 8 p.m., at 98 Naburn Street, Glasgow, C.5. Communications to M. Falconer at above address.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Tuesday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., E. Chalkley, 21, Bridge Street, E.9.

**HULL.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at York Room, The Metropole. Communications to Sec., at 62, Ampleforth Grove, Willerby Road.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to N. A. Bishop Argyle Court, 105, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Branch meets from 8 to 10 p.m. on Wednesday.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., R. Davenport, 7, Theobald Road, E.17. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., G. White, 28, Kirkstall Street, Ardwick M/C. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets 8 p.m., 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, at 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Discussion at 9.30 p.m. Sec., W. M. Veal, 73, Wornington Road, W.10.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., G. H. Southgate, 64, Pickering Rd., Neepsend. Branch meets alternate Mondays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 10, Friend's School, Hartshead.

**SOUTHEAST-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in the month, at 8 p.m. at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec. at above address.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover St., S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Sec., B. Orinsky, 33, Ernest St., Mile End. Branch meets on Fridays at Whitechapel Library (Committee Room) at 8 p.m. Lectures on alternate Fridays.

**TOOTING.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month at 8 p.m. 110, Beechcroft Road, Tooting, S.W.17. Sec., J. Keable, 1, Haverhill Road, S.W.12.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to A. Cash, Junr., 5 Morrison Avenue, N.17.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107, Kensington Avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m., at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall School, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WEMBLEY.**—Communications to H. G. Holt, 34, Beltham Road, Greenford, Middlesex. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at Cafe-Restaurant over 170, High Road, Wembley.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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*The Rich are  
always con-  
tent with the  
lot of the  
Poor—*

WERTHEIMER.

## The Uselessness of "Practical Politics"

Most Socialists are familiar with the type of criticism which consists of arguing that Socialism is a vague proposal for general change, whereas what is needed is a series of definite, practical reforms. Bertrand Russell, in the *Sunday Referee* for November 5th, reproduces this argument with a variation which is new, at any rate, to the present writer. This is the opening paragraph, which provides the key to the entire article, entitled "The age of stagnation":—

"The nineteenth century, judged by any definite test, was a period of solid progress, in comparison with which the present is an age of stagnation. This not because there were, in those days, more people who desired change, but because

reformers worked patiently for definite objects without any thought of altering the entire social order."

He then goes on to specify the particular types of reform he has in mind, such as Parliamentary reform, legal reform, sex reform and prison reform.

This attitude embodies two fairly obvious errors. In the first place the present century has witnessed

social reforms, such as National Health and Unemployment Insurance, Old Age Pensions, etc., and political reforms, such as the enfranchisement of women. One would have expected the latter, at any rate, to have held a special appeal for Mr. Russell. In the second place it is obvious that the present National Government have no "thought of altering the entire social order." On the contrary, they obtained power for "definite objects."

At the last election they obtained support by promises of certain immediate reforms. Even the Bolsheviks, who do profess to have Socialism as their ultimate aim, secured power by promising peace, land for the peasants and bread for the workers.

It is no part of the Socialist case that reforms are unnecessary. Capitalist society produces such a crop of evils that the need for reforms is constant and urgent; but it is a necessity which imposes itself upon the master class, who alone possess the power to introduce them. Hence we find arising from this class (in the words of Marx and Engels), "Economists, philanthropists, humanitarians, improvers of the condition of the working class, organisers of charity, members of societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, temperance fanatics, and hole and corner reformers of every imaginable kind." (Communist Manifesto.)

Mr. Russell belongs to this type of person. He is superficial enough to think that by concentrating attention upon the details of capitalist administration he will avoid facing the fundamental problem which the very existence of capitalism involves. In this he resembles most defenders of capitalism to-day. Indeed, this is the

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only safe line for such people to take, since the moment the workers begin to think about fundamentals the game of bluff will be nearly up.

No one need worry that they will not have enough to do if they become revolutionary. Even a small organisation like the S.P.G.B. is not maintained by meeting to pass revolutionary resolutions. Practical details have to be attended to, and will become more numerous as the Party grows. The revolution will change the class of details that need dealing with. The working class in power will find its administrative capacity amply taxed. Mr. Russell, however, wishes us to ignore the need for revolution. He offers us the barren prospect of becoming mere busybodies on behalf of our masters.

Various sections of the ruling class at present are preoccupied with what they describe as "preventing war." Not having finished paying for the last they do not relish incurring a still greater burden of debt by having another. Mr. Russell proposes, in a further article in the same paper (November 19th), international agreement to take the armament industry out of private hands. It is, of course, only to be expected that armament firms will support policies suited to their interests, but it by no means follows that Mr. Russell's proposal is any solution to the war problem.

In the first place, Governments do not increase their debts merely to oblige the armament firms. Control of trade routes, markets and sources of raw materials is essential to any powerful group of capitalists, and conflicts over this control are the prime cause of modern wars. Secondly, Mr. Russell's idea implies a degree of harmony of interests among the national groups which is simply non-existent. If they cannot agree about the division of the plunder derived from the exploitation of the workers of the world they are hardly likely to trust one another not to obtain arms except from Government arsenals. In fact, the armament industry is not a separate, watertight, economic department, it is inextricably bound up with other industries.

In order to carry out Mr. Russell's proposal each Government would either have to confiscate or purchase industrial concerns normally used for other purposes or leave them outside its control, thus losing valuable sources of supply in time of need. Mr. Russell might just as usefully suggest an international agreement between Governments not to employ civilians in war time. Experience shows that armies can, in a few months, be increased from a few hundreds of thousands to several millions, and similarly all kinds of factories become sources of war supplies, including arms and munitions, when the emergency arises. Mr. Russell, with his passion for attention to detail, should pay a certain amount of respect to details

such as these. Deeper than this he can hardly be expected to go, but of all utopian schemes that of establishing peace under capitalism is the most fantastic. Capitalism is founded upon robbery—the robbery in the workshops, mines, farms, etc., of the producers, by the possessors of these means of living. The proceeds of robbery require to be protected, both from the robbed and from rival gangs of robbers. Hence the existence of armed forces. For the international capitalist class to get rid of these forces would be equivalent to abandoning the most important guarantee of its own conditions of existence; in other words, it would be equivalent to economic and political suicide.

Disarmament in any real sense of the term is the task of the international working class. They can accomplish it only by getting control of the armed forces through consciously organised political action. That is the essential preliminary act in the drama of social revolution, whereby the means of living will be converted into the common property of all. Nothing less than the determination to emancipate themselves will provide the workers with a motive equal to the task. So long as they are prepared for slavery in the factories they will be ready for sacrifice on the battlefield at the behest of their masters.

Mr. Russell fears that much of the stagnation of which he complains is due to the fear of war. This only demonstrates the urgent need for the workers to concentrate their attention upon the revolutionary task. For them no essential change for the better can come within the limits of a system which inevitably generates wars and the fear of war. Our masters may alternately slacken or tighten our chains as circumstances dictate, but the chains will still be there until the workers as a class deliberately break them.

To any worker who is fully alive to his slave position emancipation is his supreme specific need. Compared with this the petty details of day-to-day adjustments within capitalism sink into relative unimportance. Certainly they can form no basis for a workers' party. Such a party can have for its object nothing less than Socialism.

E. B.

#### This Month's Quotation

The quotation used this month, "The rich are always content with the lot of the poor," was published in the SOCIALIST STANDARD in December, 1904, and was attributed to Wertheimer.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Trade Union Branches

The Socialist Party of Great Britain is prepared to consider applications from Trade Unions and other organisations for a representative to state the case for Socialism. Travelling expenses only are required.

## Words and Men

(Conclusion)

The romantic revulsion against industrial and commercial society had also a political aspect. Wordsworth expressed sympathy for the Jacobins and wrote in favour of the theories of the French Revolution, at least for a while; Byron was always ready to defend the underdog and in fact died fighting for the independence of Greece; Shelley never tired of attacking despotic and repressive politicians like Castlereagh. In France Lamartine was a prominent Reformist speaker and delivered fervently humanitarian orations; Victor Hugo attacked oppressive measures and red-tape officialdom, and was ultimately exiled for his denunciations of Napoleon III. These men were none the less Romantics; they were imbued with lofty and generous feelings, but those feelings were, on the whole, an avoidance of thought, not a means to it.

The Victorian age of English literature (about 1840-1880) marked the era of definite bourgeois ascendancy. Industrial capitalism had found its feet and was at last firmly enthroned. The horrors of the Industrial Revolution were fading, and the god of Things as They Are could settle complacently on his throne, conscious that after all everything was for the best in the best of worlds.

This facile optimism pervades all Dickens' work, notwithstanding his exposure of bad conditions and appeals for reform. Though his characters are diverting and his novels full of entertaining scenes, he remains, from a social point of view, a charity-monger. Ruskin, who couched his hatred of ugliness and of unbridled competition in finely resonant prose, also trusted to charity or to philanthropic legal enactment for "the betterment of mankind." In poetry the great exponent of Victorian complacency was Tennyson, "the Lullaby Laureate"; although at times he could write melodious verse, he was also responsible for some of the most jingoistic ballads in the language. Browning also was in the main satisfied with the existing order, but he has far more scope and virility than Tennyson. The Jeremiah of the new order was Carlyle, an old-fashioned Tory soured by the changes of the Industrial Revolution. Thackeray, fascinated by social success but disillusioned with regard to human beings, produced vivid descriptions of town society tinged with satire.

In France, as capitalism developed, the pendulum swung from romanticism to the most fervent realism. Balzac, in the many volumes of his "Human Comedy" (1829-1850), attempted a vast canvas portraying every nook and cranny of contemporary bourgeois life. Flaubert sprang into instant fame in 1857 with his "Madame Bovary," one of the finest reproductions of small-town inanities, petty-bourgeois aspirations, and feminine neuroses ever written in novel form. In poetry

Leconte de Lisle led the impersonal school which carried anti-romanticism to its highest peak with flawless descriptions of animals or scenery, sedulously avoiding any personal or individual reference. This was to a large extent an automatic reaction from the exuberances of Hugo and Lamartine; it had its roots in the increasing pace of production and sub-division of labour which were rapidly sapping the individuality of the mass of mankind.

Personal poetry, however, soon reappeared in the morbidly introspective, quiveringly sensitive, neurotically complex works of Baudelaire. "Flowers of Evil" appeared in the same year as "Madame Bovary," and caused an even greater scandal. The book is a perfect illustration of the emotional chaos and intellectual agony that ensue when an acutely sensitive and highly intelligent man finds himself unable either to conform to, escape from, or even comprehend a society which thwarts and dazzles him by turns.

Victorian smugness was followed by a colourful attempt to counteract the "filth of civilisation" by the pre-Raphaelite movement; there was one poet among them—Swinburne. He is chiefly noteworthy for his unrestrained abuse of the Church and his glorification of Garibaldi. Thus once more the irony of history turns things upside down: the hatred of developed capitalism takes the form of supporting those nationalist movements which are prerequisites to capitalist development.

Apart from attacks on capitalism in general, a swing away from conservatism made itself felt in Meredith—writer of novels, many of which pay little heed to social problems but yet do not take even high society circles over-seriously—and in Hardy, whose grimly realistic description pairs oddly with his mystical, brooding fatalism. Hardy attacked conservatism on the field of morals, and fled from the problems and squalor of industrialism to those of a well-nigh extinct peasantry.

One of the greatest enemies of capitalism in English literature was William Morris; although, perhaps, it is not his literary work that chiefly commands respect, it is important in that it bears throughout the imprint of his passionate detestation of all things capitalist and his unshakable conviction that the mass of men had in the past known happiness and would know it again, but to immeasurably fuller extent, under Socialism. Morris's influence in literature has been considerable, but not always fortunate. His Arts and Crafts movement, virile in his own hands, was emasculated when dissociated from an understanding of history and society.

Towards the end of the century the short story became popular in France with de Maupassant's vital cameos of petty bourgeois society. Many of them are spicy, yet almost insipid. There is a hollowness about them as there is about the



drawing-room life with which they deal. De Maupassant's technique has never been bettered: he is a byword for economy of style—"everything that is necessary and nothing that is not." At the same period Zola thrust the working-class into literature. Although he is often called a realist, for careful accuracy of description and vivid characterisation Zola ranks far below Flaubert and Balzac; he surpasses them, however, in his social vision, seeing society as a whole rather than in a series of pigeon-holes. He knew there was a class-war, and ranged himself with the exploited. "Germinal" and "Earth," his best novels, deal with the aspirations and struggles of the miners and farm labourers respectively. Emotional about them he may be, even sentimental, but here is no charity-monger, nor a romantic flying to a Utopian past.

One of the greatest literary figures of this age, whether in France or England, was that delightful satirist, Anatole France. Scholarly, but never pedantic; restrained, but always pregnant with meaning; passionate without heat or violence, his polished sentences flow irresistibly over the whole field of human endeavour and submerge it in unquenchable irony. Ultimately his outlook is defeatist: he conceives man's stupidity to be ineradicable; but his delicate analysis of social movements, of historical incidents and of individual psychology, makes him rich and delightful reading for all critics of modern society. He has the venom of a Swift, the malice of a Voltaire, the delicacy of a Jane Austen, tempered by the experience of history and given enormous range by the complexity of modern life. "Penguin Island," his masterpiece, was undertaken in order to "debunk" the Dreyfus case, but developed into a complete parody of French history. Its sly allusions, illuminating anecdotes and subtly ironical comments crowd too thickly upon the pages to be fully savoured at a first or even second reading.

We have now considered English and French literature from the tenth century to the close of the nineteenth. Later and contemporary works will not be dealt with here. This is not a detailed history but a survey of tendencies exemplified by typical authors. Many figures of great interest must be excluded, for reasons of space. Moreover, in order to make known authors who are often passed over in spite of their significance, relative prominence has been given to men of earlier periods, as compared with recent writers with whom most readers are familiar.

Literature is essentially an outcome of human personalities. Personality itself is the action and reaction between a human physiology and its social environment—complexity reacting on complexity. Hence literature has room for an infinity of gradations and modifications.

When we state that literature reflects the movements in society to which its economic basis, the mode of production, gives rise, we do not mean that they are reflected with the precision of a mirror, but rather as in the ruffled surface of a pond: the reflections may be shimmering and irregular in outline, but their main substance is unmistakable. STEWART.

### Answers to a Correspondent

A reader in Canada puts a series of questions, which, together with brief answers, are printed below.

#### Are Taxes a Burden on the Workers?

(1) "Who Pays the Taxes?"

The answer to this question is that money for taxes is actually paid over by workers as well as capitalists. But while that is so it is also true that rates and taxes are not a burden on the working class, but on the capitalist class alone; and further that it is immaterial, in the long run, to the workers whether rates and taxes are high or low, just as it is immaterial whether prices are high or low.

The explanation of this seeming paradox is that the worker lives by selling his labour-power to the capitalist. The price, or wage, the worker gets when he sells his labour-power fluctuates about the value of the labour-power; and the value of the labour-power, like the value of all other commodities, is the cost of its production. The cost of producing labour-power is the cost of the food, clothing, shelter, etc., needed for the maintenance of the worker and his family. This is true, whatever the level of prices. If prices rise then the worker must either suffer a reduction in his standard of living or else get an increase of wages which will enable him to buy the same amounts of food, etc., as before. Although wages usually rise more slowly than prices, this is in fact bound to happen. Similarly, when prices fall so do wages. If a new tax is levied which enters into the worker's cost of living, this will—other things remaining unchanged—be offset by a corresponding rise in wages. If such a tax is removed it will be offset by a fall of wages.

In other words, taxes and rates are a burden only on the capitalist class.

(2) "If the capitalist pays the taxes, how can he do this when he does not produce anything?"

This question indicates confusion of thought. Ability to pay taxes, or to pay anything, is not dependent on producing something, but on owning something. The capitalists own the means of production and distribution, and are consequently able to force the workers to agree to produce goods, not for themselves but for the capitalists. The goods produced by the workers do not at any

stage belong to the workers. Therefore the workers are never in a position to pay away these goods. The goods belong to the capitalists as soon as they are produced, and because of this the capitalists, although they do not produce the goods, are able to pay taxes.

#### Industrial Action.

(3) "Do you advocate industrial action in conjunction with political action for the emancipation of the working class?"

The working class can only emancipate themselves when they have gained control of the machinery of government including the armed forces. Political action will give them this control. Industrial action will not, and cannot, do so. Industrial action (if by that is meant action on the economic field) is necessary to defend the workers' standard of living under capitalism. As such we advocate it. We do not advocate such action as a means of emancipating the working class because it is not, and cannot be, a means of emancipation.

#### Organisation and Education.

(4) "Must organisation precede education to emancipate the workers?"

The only kind of organisation which can enable the workers to emancipate themselves is organisation on a Socialist basis, that is, organisation of Socialists. As there can be no Socialists without knowledge of Socialist principles, it follows that education must precede organisation. Every attempt to dodge this has resulted in the wasted effort of building up organisations which at the first test have proved broken reeds, worthless for Socialism. This applies equally to organisations on the economic and on the political field.

(5) Can the working class emancipate itself only through political power? How could you gain political power if the ballot is taken away from the workers?"

The answer to the first question is that the only road to emancipation is through conquest of political power. This, and the second question, have frequently been dealt with. See *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, November, 1933. See also *Socialism and The S.P.G.B. and Questions of the Day*, in both of which the Socialist Party's attitude is explained.

#### The Italian Workers and Fascism.

(6) "The Italian working-class were strongly organised on the political and industrial field in 1919 or before the Fascists gained power. Now could you explain why the Italian workers failed to establish Socialism? I am referring to the time when the workers captured the factories in Italy."

The answer to this question is that the assumptions on which it is based are entirely without foundation. The Italian workers were never, at any time "strongly organised on the political and

industrial field." Never at any time were there more than a small minority of Socialists (as distinct from reformists of various brands) in Italy. The seizure of the factories (supported, incidentally, by Mussolini and his Fascists) was not an attempt to establish Socialism. (For full details see *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, March, 1931.)

If our correspondent disputes our statement that the great mass of Italian workers were non-Socialist we challenge him to produce evidence in support of his claim.

#### Ourselves and the Crisis.

(7) "How long will the present crisis last?" To this question we can only reply that we are not prophets, and we do not know. We would, however, add one remark. It is that already in nearly every country in the world there has been some slight recovery showing itself in expanded production as compared with the level of production at the worst point of the crisis.

#### State Capitalism and the Safety of the System.

(8) "Will State capitalism prolong the present system of wage-slavery and give the capitalist class a breathing spell?"

We disagree with the implication that capitalism is faced with the choice between State capitalism and collapse. Although some capitalist countries (particularly the backward ones like Russia and Turkey) are relying to some extent on the State capitalist form of organisation for their industries, other countries, such as Great Britain, are turning towards State control in the form of public utility corporations. Moreover, while the latter form serves to solve certain capitalist problems, the British capitalist class have not been compelled to adopt it as the only way of getting a breathing spell. So far they have never been in any serious danger from the British workers.

(9) "What will happen if the working class will not organise to do away with capitalism?"

If it were possible for the workers to accept passively the indefinite continuance of capitalism, then capitalism would continue indefinitely. That is all that could be said about it.

Actually, however, the question presupposes something which is impossible. The workers organise because they are driven to do so by discontent which capitalism engenders. To assume the absence of discontent is to assume capitalism without the attributes of capitalism, exploitation without an exploited class, suppression without resistance. Such speculations are divorced from reality. ED. COMM.

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## The Materialist Conception of History

By FREDERICK ENGELS

Translated for "The Proletarian" by Prof. J. I. Cheskis, of the University of Michigan.

[We have been asked to reprint two letters written by Engels which dealt with the materialist conception of history. The points touched upon are still the subject of much misunderstanding among critics of Marx. The letters were published in the SOCIALIST STANDARD in February and March, 1920.—Ed. Comm. "S.S."]

In the course of a discussion that followed a public lecture, given at a seminary, a student asked Engels to give him precise explanations of the two following points:

1. To what extent do economic conditions act as a causative influence?

2. What part is played by the race and by the individual according to the "historical materialism" of Marx and Engels?

Engels replied:

London, Jan. 25, 1895.

122, Regents Park Road, N.W.

Dear Sir,—Following is the reply to your two questions:

1. The economic conditions, which we consider as the determinative basis in the history of society, we understand to be the manner in which men in a given society produce their means of subsistence and the ways in which they effect the exchange of products among themselves (this as long as division of labour exists). The entire technique of production and transportation is here included. According to our conception this technique determines the mode of exchange, of distribution of products, and—after the disintegration of the tribal system—the division of society into classes, the conditions of master and slave, of State, of politics, law, etc. Further, among the economic conditions under which these phenomena obtain, must be included the geographical environment, and also the actual remains of former phases of economic evolution which often persisted by force of tradition, inertia, or because of circumstances which surround that form of society.

Even if, as you say, technique largely depends on the conditions of science, yet, in a greater measure, does the latter depend on the *conditions of and the need for technique*. If society is in the need of the development of a certain technique, this helps science more than ten universities. The science of hydrostatics was the sole result of the need that Italy felt in the 16th and 17th centuries of controlling the course of her torrents in the mountains. We began to understand the science of electricity only when we discovered its practical application. In Germany, however, they have

become accustomed to treat the history of science as though it had fallen out of the sky.

2. We hold, that in the final analysis, economic conditions constitute the determinative factor in historical evolution. Here, therefore, we must hold in view two points:

(A). That the political, juridical, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, etc., evolutions are based on the economic evolution. They all re-act upon each other and upon the economic basis. It does not mean that the economic factor is the *sole active cause* and all the others merely passive effects. But the whole situation presents a mutual interaction among the various forces on the basis of economic necessity, which latter force ultimately prevails. The State, for instance, exerts an influence by means of protective tariffs, free exchange, good or bad revenue laws; and even the boundless stupidity and impotence of the German petty Bourgeoisie—which grew out of Germany's economic misery during the period from 1648 to 1830, and which first manifested itself in piety, then in sentimentality and fawning servility before the nobles and princes—was not without its economic consequences. It was one of the greatest obstacles to the renaissance and was not shaken off until the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars made the economic wretchedness unbearable. History is not as some would imagine, for the sake of their greater convenience, an automatic effect of the economic situation, but men themselves make their own history. Certain it is, however, that *men act in accordance with the prevailing conditions that dominate their field of action*. And among these the economic circumstances, however much influenced by political and ideological forces, are always of chief importance. In the final reckoning they constitute the decisive factor and form the golden thread which guides the student to the correct, all-comprehensive understanding of the subject.

(B). Men make their own history, but not as the result of a general volition nor in accordance with some general plan—not even in a given limited social group. Men's aspirations oppose each other. Out of this circumstance, in every similar group, arises an imperative need whose chance, concomitance or accidently, is at once the complement and the form of its manifestation. The need or necessity which here underlies every chance appearance is in the end the economic necessity. The so-called great man appears. But the fact that it happens to be a *certain great man*, appearing at a certain time and at a certain given place, is simply mere chance. But if we eliminate him there arises an immediate demand for a substitute, and this substitute in time found, *tant bien que mal*. That Napoleon became a military dictator—of which the French republic, exhausted by civil wars, stood in need—was merest chance; but that

in the event of Napoleon's non-appearance there would have been another to occupy his place is proven by the fact that in every instance in which there was such a need the man was found—Cæsar, Augustus, Cromwell, etc. If it happened to be Marx who discovered the law of historical materialism, yet Thierry, Mignet, Guizot, who up to 1850 were writing English histories, proves that such a notion already existed, and the discovery of the same idea by Morgan further proves that the times were ripe for such an event and the discovery was an *imperative need*.

And so it is with every other true or apparent accidentality in history. The farther the field that we may be examining recedes from the economic, and the nearer it approaches the merely abstract ideologic, the more we shall find—in its evolution—such accidentalities appearing on the scene, and the more does the curve of its evolution fluctuate. If one should attempt, however, to trace the axis of this curve, one should find that the longer the time period observed and the larger the field thus treated, the more nearly does this axis run parallel to the axis of the economic evolution.

In Germany the great hindrance to a true understanding of these things lies in the inexcusable neglect of this subject by the writers of economic history. It is so difficult to rid oneself of the historical conceptions inculcated by schools, and still more difficult to collect the necessary materials. Who, for example, has read old J. V. Julich, who includes in his dry collections so many explanations of various political phenomena!

Moreover, it seems to me the beautiful example given us by Marx in his "Eighteenth Brumaire" furnishes a sufficient answer to your questions—the more so because it is a practical illustration. And I believe myself to have touched upon those points in "Anti-Duehring," I., chapters 9-11, II., chapters 2-4, and III., chapter 1, and also in the introduction and in the last chapter of "Feuerbach."

I would ask you not to pass judgment on this letter, but to consider only the thoughts it conveys. I am sorry I have not the time to write you with that exactness I should employ when writing for the public.

Kindly give my regards to Mr. — and thank him for the . . . which has given me much pleasure.

With profound respect,

Most devotedly yours,

F. ENGELS.

(The second letter will appear next month.)

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\* \* \* \* \*

### Correction—"Bolshevism: Past and Present"

Too late for last issue we received from the writer of the above article notification that the date in line 37 of column one, on Page 68, should have been 1924, not 1917.

### NOTICES OF MEETINGS & LECTURES

All meetings are open to non-members, admission free. Questions and discussion are welcomed.

**SOCIAL AT HEAD OFFICE.** A Tea and Social will be held at Head Office, on Saturday, Feb. 10th, at 7.30 p.m. Members and friends invited.

**BATTERSEA.** Lectures will be given in the Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, on Thursdays, Feb. 1st and Feb. 22nd, at 8.30 p.m.

Feb. 1st, "The Eighteenth Brumaire," A. Reginold.

Feb. 22nd, "The Rise and Development of Trade Unions," G. Bellingham.

**BETHNAL GREEN LIBRARY.**—A meeting will be held in Bethnal Green Library on Friday, Feb. 16th, at 8 p.m. "The Socialist view of Reform," Sandy.

**HACKNEY.** Old Gravel Pit Hall, Valette Street, E.9. Tuesdays at 8.30 p.m. Feb. 6th, "Economics of To-day," Goldstein; Feb. 13th, "Russia To-day," Howard; Feb. 20th, "Reform or Revolution," Berry; Feb. 27th, "Political History of the 19th Century," Ishitsky.

**HULL.** A meeting will be held at the Educational Institute, Kingston Square, on Sunday, Feb. 18th, at 2.45 p.m., under the auspices of the Hull Sunday Association. Subject, "Is Karl Marx Out-of-date?" Speaker, A. Kohn. Admission free.

**LEYTON.** Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, Sunday evenings, 8 p.m. Feb. 4th, S. Cash, "Will Britain follow the Moscow Trail"; Feb. 11th, G. Bellingham, "The Rise and Development of Trade Unionism"; Feb. 18th, S. Stewart, "The Life and Times of Rbt. Owen"; Feb. 25th, Cameron, "General Strikes."

**POPLAR TOWN HALL.**—A meeting will be held at Poplar Town Hall, Newby Place, Poplar, on Sunday, Feb. 18th, at 8 p.m. "Why the S.P.G.B. opposes all other Political Parties," S. Goldstein.

**WEMBLEY.** Meetings will be held at Hamilton Hall, 375 High Road, Willesden (near Pound Lane), on Sunday afternoons at 3.30 p.m., as follows:—

Feb. 4th, "Rise of Trade Unionism," G. Bellingham.

Feb. 18th, "Parliament and the Revolutionary Object of the S.P.G.B., A. Jacobs.

**ECONOMICS CLASS.** An Economics Class Conducted by A. Kohn, will be held at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, each Wednesday evening at 8 p.m.

### HOW TO GET TO HEAD OFFICE.

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## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

FEBRUARY,



1934

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

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## The German Situation

### Belated Support for Our Views

A special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* contributed two articles recently (Jan. 12th and 13th) on the collapse of the opposition to the Nazis and on the prospects of a new opposition. His estimate, based on a detailed knowledge of the facts, fully bears out our criticisms of the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party.

"Nothing is now left," he says, "of the apparently big and powerful Social Democratic and Communist parties, and the Hitlerite government is more solidly established than ever. It has gained many voluntary supporters among the urban working class, particularly among the younger generation."

Of the Social Democrats he says:—

Although they professed Marxist principles, they were not Marxist. . . . They were essentially conservative.

He thinks that the old party is discredited beyond recovery, but this, even if true, does not mean that the old illusions cannot be taken up by new organisations.

The views he holds about the Communists in Germany are particularly deserving of notice:—

The German Communist party has always been over-rated, chiefly because of its great numerical strength, which was always out of proportion to its real strength. Indeed, so great was this disproportion that the German Communist movement came perilously near to being a colossal piece of bluff. There is not, and there never was, a "Communist danger" in Germany. . . .

The German Communists never fought a single successful action, they never even began an action that could conceivably be successful. . . . They were never able to call a general strike, or even any partial strike beyond ineffectual, desultory, local stoppages. . . .

Although full of revolutionary dogma, they were

not revolutionaries, and never had the slightest conception of what a revolution is. . . . Each of their so-called "revolutionary risings" (such as the central German insurrection of 1921 and the Hamburg insurrection of 1923) was a cruel farce from beginning to end.

The correspondent rightly points out that the German Communists, like the German Social Democrats, talked about "Marxist logic," but were "neither Marxist nor logical." They were "for illegality above everything, and preferred illegal defeat to legal victory."

Although their membership at the time of the collapse was probably about 100,000, and they had had five or six million votes cast for them not long before, "they collapsed without resistance" and "just as ingloriously" as the Social Democrats.

The correspondent is right when he says: "It is probable that Marx would have repudiated Social Democrats and Communists with equal indignation."

The above valuation of the Social Democrats and Communists is fully borne out by the record of their activities during the past, and, indeed, their collapse in face of the Nazis was inevitable in view of the unsound foundations on which they had built up their movements. When, however, the *Manchester Guardian* correspondent comes to deal with the present and the future, he betrays his own illusions as well as those of the new German movement.

Local, unco-ordinated groups are being formed to carry on the work of building up a new movement opposed equally to Social Democrats and Communists. They have learned much from past mistakes, but are already committed to numerous fallacies.

They think they are determined to re-examine every theory, but are already prejudiced by the assumption that "the whole materialistic conception of history needs revision, and perhaps more than revision." Far be it from us to discourage the examination of every theory, but we emphatically deny that Social-Democrats and Communists are in a position to reject the materialist conception of history as a thing outworn, or as a tool which has failed them. What they are rejecting is the hopelessly distorted version that has served in their circles. Their task should now be to examine the doctrine itself, as it really is.

Although they claim to be aware that a genuine Socialist movement needs its own form of organisation different from the "mass-movements" utilised by Nazis, Communists and Social-Democrats alike, they are already falling victims to the superstition of leadership, seen in its extreme form in the Nazi Party. They are aiming at the formation of "an élite which will, by intelligence, by strength and integrity of character, and by devoted championship of liberty achieve influence and leadership." Here are the seeds of new dissensions and betrayals as soon as the relaxing of

the present suppression opens up the chance of careers and office to the "leaders" of the opposition.

Lastly, the new movement has swallowed the Communist nostrum of "action" at the so-called "psychological moment." They propose to "impinge upon the decisive event—a strike, a crisis, a war—and give it a bias or a twist in a certain direction." Is it possible for fond illusion to go further than that? As if every decisive event of the modern world did not cry aloud the stupidity of such hopes. Every war, every crisis, every strike demonstrates the utter impotence of the "revolutionary minority" to grasp and dominate the situation for any purpose helpful to Socialism.

Having learned something, but not enough, under the pressure of the swing to Hitlerism, these German workers are now busily preparing new tribulations and disasters for the German working class.

## This Money Business

One of the most common difficulties encountered by anyone attempting to form an idea of life under Socialism is that connected with the necessary disappearance of money. People who are ready enough to agree with us in our criticism of capitalism and its effects become frankly incredulous when we point out that the abolition of production for profit will involve the end of commerce and its instruments, i.e., coin of the realm, bank and treasury notes, bills of exchange, and practically the entire machinery of the civil

law which regulates contracts. Yet they can suggest no logical alternative.

So-called "Socialists" (such as George Bernard Shaw, for example, in "The Intelligent

Woman's Guide," etc.), who propose a form of "Socialism" in which money would continue to be used, merely surrender to unthinking prejudice in favour of the most deeply rooted economic institution of capitalism. Their excuse is that money is needed to give people a choice of the varied products of modern industry. They ignore the fact that when the means whereby industry is carried on become the property of society then the members of society will simultaneously enter into possession of the products.

Under such conditions individuals desiring to satisfy their wants (whether of food, clothing, shelter, amusement, travel or education) will no longer have to deal with private concerns (whose interest is financial in character), but with the social group of which they are themselves members. It will be the special business of public bodies democratically controlled to organise the production and distribution of as wide a variety of articles and services as may be desired by society. This form of organisation will take the place of the existing Government or State whose special function is to protect the property of the capitalist class.

Every man and woman will be provided with the opportunity to take part in this organisation, and the results will depend upon the energy and intelligence displayed by the members of society as a whole. The greater that energy and intelligence

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



the greater will be the variety from which *all* will be able to choose.

Under capitalism choice depends quite obviously upon depth of purse. The greater the quantity of money an individual possesses the less he is called upon to think or exert himself in the task of producing his needs. To pretend that the wages of the workers enable them to choose what clothes they shall wear or what kind of houses they shall live in is to display either ignorance or hypocrisy. The wages of the workers are determined by the standard necessary to enable them to live and produce profits for their masters. Before one can be said to have a choice of the enormous variety of goods produced at the present time, one must, therefore, have a quantity of money large enough to lift one out of the working class and enable one to exist not merely in luxury but idleness. Socialism will certainly abolish this form of choice.

Shaw and others suggest that Socialism will accomplish it by means of equal incomes. A money income implies either that one sells something or that something is being sold upon one's behalf. Money is meaningless apart from buying and selling. If, therefore, people under Shaw's "Socialism" are to be dependent upon money, what are they going to sell, and to whom? There will be no capitalists owning the products of labour and placing them upon the market. There will be no wage-workers selling their productive abilities to capitalists. One can only imagine, therefore, that (in the brains of the men of "genius," like Shaw) the people will spend their time buying things from and selling them to themselves!

We suggest that they will have something better to do. The allotment holder and his family do not need money to enable them to decide whether they will have cabbage for dinner or kidney beans; and when the workers collectively own and control the earth they will decide with similar freedom the details of distributing the fruits of their labour upon it.

It may be thought that the question of money under Socialism is, after all, merely an academic one; but a little reflection should show that this is by no means the case.

The Labour Party, for example, has recently advanced a policy for dealing with the banks, which implies the continuation of these institutions. The reason is simple. In spite of its use of Socialist phraseology on occasions, the Labour Party stands for the retention of capitalism, and consequently must retain the institutions upon which it is based, banks included. It is the habit of politicians of every shade to try and persuade the workers that their interests are bound up with the financial system, e.g., that inflation or deflation is necessary to "prosperity," in which the workers are supposed to share.

The Socialist recognises that the only thing he has to sell is his capacity to work and, therefore,

produce a profit for a boss; and that all he can buy simply goes in restoring that capacity day by day. He is not interested in "financial stability" or "cheaper credit." These are phrases which have a practical meaning only to different sections of the class which lives by buying labour power and selling its products. Hence the Socialist is not to be misled into giving support to National Governments with the idea of "saving the Gold Standard!"; nor to replacing them by Labour Governments who want to "control the banks!" Slogans like these succeed in duping those who do not understand the existing social system and the part played by money.

Socialists point out to the workers that they possess, as a class, all the needed energy and intelligence to erect a new social system based upon the common ownership of the means of life, in which system they will no longer need to sell themselves piecemeal as articles of merchandise. They will be free to enjoy to the full the results of their collective labour.

E. B.

### "Attack"

Such is the title of the paper published by the Green Shirt Movement for Social Credit, and the following quotations are taken from an article in issue No. 20, dated the 25th November, 1933.

Some of the headings to this article read as follows:—"Men of Britain," "Fight or Starve," "Votes are Useless," etc., and the quotations thus:—"This is Britain under the domination of Threadneedle Street through a corrupt Parliament." "Insurrection the only way out." "The Green Shirt Movement is welding the workers and unemployed of this country into a fighting weapon which will soon, on the streets of every town and city in this country, throw down the challenge to the Bankers' Combine." "We must fill the country with trained men willing to sacrifice all in this final bid."

These extracts briefly explain the object of the Green Shirt Movement, and, in spite of such nonsense, if we believe them, the movement is growing.

The absurdity of the idea that the country is under the dictatorship of the Bankers has been dealt with in the SOCIALIST STANDARD in three articles under the heading of the "Douglas System," and on many other occasions. Such misleading propaganda put forward by these people is a menace to the working-class movement. "We have tried constitutional methods of changing things," they say, "but now, after fifteen years of the most hellish peace the world has ever known, we are once again forced to fight."

Who is meant by "we" is not stated, but neither the Green Shirts nor the workers in this or any other country have ever tried to remove

capitalism (which is the root of their troubles) by Parliamentary action. Yet these fanatics are planning to "train the workers" to fight one of the most powerful fighting machines in the world, namely the armed forces of the State. After the last great blood bath is it necessary to remind the workers of what this consists? Battleships, aeroplanes, tanks, machine guns, poison gases, and huge numbers of highly efficient soldiery. Does history count for nothing? Repeated insurrections have been dealt with ruthlessly and murderously by the ruling classes, and rivers of working-class blood have flowed to waste.

How the Green Shirts intend to train the workers to combat the almost limitless resources of our masters we are not told. Perhaps it is the "Communist" way, the peashooter and knuckle-duster, etc., or an appeal to the War Office for all the obsolete weapons as a result of the "Disarmament" Conference. Do they not know that it is extremely difficult to obtain even a firearm licence.

The Green Shirts are merely another organisation appealing to popular fancy and obscuring the real issue. Surely everyone knows that we have poverty in the midst of plenty, colossal unemployment, and a thousand other contradictions. What they do not know is the way out. To get the workers on to the streets is the easiest way for the ruling class to knock all the revolutionary spirit out of the masses, and here the Green Shirts become the agents of the master class, consciously or otherwise.

The workers must first realise that the present system, based on the private ownership of the means of production, is the cause of their misery and insecurity, and their enslavement as a class, and no false notions regarding economics and armed insurrection will achieve their emancipation. The vote is not useless if backed by a class-conscious understanding. The workers certainly must organise, but it must be for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism in its stead. They should study the "Declaration of Principles" of the Socialist Party, and "Clear a path through the present confusion."

H. P. D.

### "The Western Socialist"

The Socialist Party of Canada is now publishing a Journal, "The Western Socialist." Copies are obtainable from the Socialist Party of Canada, Manitoba Hotel, 194, Market Avenue East, Winnipeg, at five cents a copy; or at 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, at 2d. per copy (2½d. post free). The first issue was published in October, and further issues will be published as funds allow.

### "SOCIALISM AND RELIGION"

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## Marxism and the Labour Party: Dr. Eismann Replies

In the December issue, under the heading Marx and Hitler, we criticised an article by one of Hitler's supporters, Dr. Eismann, in which he had claimed that the British Labour Party is a Marxist organisation.

|| Writing in *Beamten Jahrbuch* (Berlin, January), Dr. Eismann replies to our criticism. He quotes a fairly lengthy passage from our article, but omits the last paragraph. By doing this he is able to argue that, reading between the lines of our article, he can find an admission on our part that the I.L.P., the S.L.P., and the S.D.F. have influenced the Labour Party towards Marxism.

Let us, therefore, reproduce the paragraph he omits to quote:—

If he knows anything about Marxism, he must know that the Labour Party is no more a Marxist party than the National Government Party, now led by McDonald, the former leader of the Labour Party.

Unless Dr. Eismann believes that Baldwin and Sir John Simon are Marxists and that MacDonald is, or has been, a Marxist, we fail to see how he can really believe that paragraph indicates that we admit the Labour Party to be a Marxist organisation. Unless, of course, anyone he does not like is in his view a "Marxist." However, in case he is in any doubt, let us assure him that the British Labour Party is not now, and never has been, Marxist. Its programme, policy and whole philosophy (if it can be credited with a philosophy) have been, and are, essentially anti-Marxist.

It may, incidentally, interest Dr. Eismann to know that the *Times* (January 4th, 1934), in an article on the influence of the Fabian Society, attributes to that organisation the chief responsibility "for the characteristically native form assumed by English Socialism in contrast with revolutionary Marxism." (Italics ours.)

"English Socialism" is the *Times'* way of designating the Labour Party.

Not Marx, but Robert Owen, Jeremy Bentham, and John Stuart Mill are claimed by Sidney Webb (now Lord Passfield), and by the Fabian Society, as the "spiritual fathers" of the British Labour Party.

In short, we repeat that when Dr. Eismann denounces the British Labour Party for being Marxist, he does not know what he is talking about.

### INDEX to "SOCIALIST STANDARD"

A full index to the "Socialist Standard" for the year September, 1932 to August, 1933, has been prepared and printed. It will be supplied at 1d. per copy (1½d. post free). Send your order at once to Literature Secretary, 42 Great Dover Street, S.E.1, or apply to local branch.



## Notes by the Way

### Australian Labour Party decides to Imitate us—and Changes its Mind

The S.P.G.B. uses as part of its internal organisation a set of questions which Party speakers may be required to answer. The questions cover all important phases of social history and organisation, and Socialist principles, and are considered to be a useful test of a speaker's fitness to state the Party's case. Noticing in an American journal last year several of these questions reproduced, with the announcement that these were questions the Australian Labour Party thought of making its M.P.'s answer, we got in touch with our Australian comrades to obtain further information on what looked like an interesting situation. We had visions of unfortunate Australian Labour M.P.'s wrinking their brows over such questions as the following:—

Are there occasions on which the class struggle may be suspended with advantage to the working class?

and Name the alleged Labour Parties and show wherein they fail to fulfil the requirements of a working-class party.

Information now received from Australia shows that it was a case of an impulsive idea proposed by a Labour Party group in Sydney promptly smothered by the parent body.

While it was under discussion it provided some amusement for the local Press. *The Daily Telegraph* (Sydney, January 24th, 1933) quoted an unnamed Labour member of the Australian Federal Parliament as saying:—

I doubt if there are five men in the movement who could answer the suggested questions properly, and I'm certain there are not five who could adjudicate competently.

We won't quarrel with the unnamed Labourite's estimate of his colleagues; he knows them better than we do.

### Misery and Crime

"The chief cause of crime is not gambling or drink: it is nearly always misery."—Mr. F. T. Barrington-Ward, K.C., Thames Police Court Magistrate. (*News-Chronicle*, January 5th.)

### The Cash Value of Irish "Freedom"

One of the incidental results of the setting up of the Irish Free State has been that Government employees are even worse paid there than in Great Britain. Half the Post Office "manipulative" staff (Postmen, Sorters, Telegraphists, Telephonists, etc.) receive less than 30s. a week, and the advocates of Irish independence are not at all concerned about the matter. Mr. H. P. Boland, representing the Department of Finance in De Valera's Government, had the following to say

in evidence before the Irish Civil Service Commission on December 2nd (see *An Dion*, January, 1934):—

He did not believe that the State could afford to pay the British scale. It could not be done. Adjustments made since 1924 were all downwards, and time would show that that was perfectly right.

There are not many tricks the Irish patriots have not learned from their British counterparts, even down to the detail of calling wage reductions by the less harsh-sounding word, "adjustments."

It is worth noticing that Mr. Maxton and Mr. McGovern, representing the I.L.P., during January paid a friendly visit to De Valera, the representative of a section of Irish capitalist interests, just as, a few years ago, the I.L.P. assisted in giving a dinner in honour of that spokesman of Indian capitalists, Mr. Gandhi.

On the present occasion doubtless Maxton and McGovern have an eye on something nearer home than Dublin, viz., the strong Irish vote in their constituencies.

### Lancashire, India and Japan

The Lancashire cotton manufacturers complain bitterly because of their lost markets abroad. For years their story was that India was undercutting them owing to cheap labour in the Indian mills. Then the Indian millowners took up the cry, complaining that they were being ruined by Japanese cotton, due to cheap labour in Japan.

Actually these over-simplified explanations are not by any means the whole of the truth. The history of capitalism contains many more examples of "high-wage" factories (that is, a factory paying a larger wage for a higher type of labour) enabled, by the use of machinery, to undersell and ruin "low-wage" competitors, than of the reverse process. The rise of Ford motors is a recent example, and Lancashire itself rose to supremacy by ruining "low-wage" rivals.

Now along comes an Indian textile capitalist, Sir Lallubhai Samaldas, who has written a book after a visit to Japan telling us that the Japs are able to undersell Indian textiles because they look after the workers better than the Indian millowners do. (*Indian Labour Journal*, December 24th, 1933.) He chides the Indian millowners with neglecting to utilise up-to-date machinery and points out that the Indian workers would be able to produce as cheaply as the Japs if they were better fed and housed.

The claims of humanity mean no more to Indian or Japanese millowners than they did, or do, to English ones, but when and where it is found that modern conditions of factory production require a little more food and a little better housing the capitalists begin to take an interest in these things. But the motive is always the same, the search for profits and more profits.

### The Bolsheviks and the U.S.A.

The recognition of Russia by President Roosevelt was so much desired by the Russian Government that in order to get it they gave undertakings which are not likely to be popular among American Communists. Among other things the Soviet Government promises to refrain from interfering in any manner in the internal affairs of United States territories or possessions; to restrain any organisation under its control or receiving financial assistance from it, from any act liable in any way whatsoever to injure tranquillity, order or security, or liable "to bring about by force a change in the social or political order"; and not to permit the formation or residence in Russia of organisations seeking to overthrow the American social order. (See *Review of Reviews*, December.)

These pledges will prevent the Russians from subsidising American Communists and from permitting the Third International to do so.

### A Few Kind Words from Mr. Litvinov

Mr. Litvinov, who fixed up this and other Russian agreements with countries abroad, delivered a speech on December 29th at the session of the All-Union Central Executive in Moscow. (See full report in *Moscow News*, January 6th.) In it he made some noteworthy statements illustrating the principles which now guide Bolshevik policy.

He emphasised several times the doctrine (in striking contrast with the principles on which the Communist International was founded) that the Bolsheviks do not wish to interfere in any way with the internal affairs of other countries. He vigorously repudiated the suggestion that Russia had allowed its attitude towards Germany to be influenced by the brutal treatment of Communists in Germany, and made the following unctuous remarks:—

We, of course, have our own opinion of the German régime. We, of course, are sensitive to the sufferings of our German comrades, but we Marxists can be reproached least of all for permitting our feelings to dominate our policy.

The whole world knows that we can maintain and are maintaining good relations with capitalist States under any régime, including also a fascist régime. But that is not the point. We do not interfere in the internal affairs of Germany, just as in those of other countries, and our relations with her are determined not by her internal, but her foreign policy.

We want to have the best relations with Germany, as with other states.

Communists in German prisons and under sentence of death for carrying out the instructions of the Moscow International will no doubt derive much comfort from these few kind words uttered by Mr. Litvinov.

Speaking about Russia's "sincere friendship" with capitalist Turkey, Litvinov declared that "if

all peoples were able to establish similar relationships among themselves, the problem of peace would be solved." This is Utopianism with a vengeance, the notion that the rivalries of capitalist States can be abolished by pacts of friendship.

He spoke of Russia and France having a "common desire to work actively in the interests of preserving universal peace," and then in the next breath recorded the visit to Russia of M. Pierre Cot, French Minister of Aviation. It is hardly necessary to remind Mr. Litvinov that M. Cot is not Minister of Aviation in order to prepare for universal peace, but to make preparation for aerial warfare. Another French visitor was M. Herriot, whom Litvinov described as a sincere friend of peace. Mr. Herriot showed it very soon after returning to France by dismissing from their employment under the Lyons town council several workers who refused, on anti-militarist grounds, to attend an anti-air-raid display.

### The Labour Party in New Zealand.

A *Times* correspondent, writing from New Zealand (*Times*, December 23rd), makes a useful review of the political situation there. The present depression has produced aggravated discontent in New Zealand as elsewhere, and the Labour Party, under its new leader, Mr. M. J. Savage, is making a bid for power. The correspondent considers that there is at least a possibility of a Labour Government in New Zealand for the first time.

The reasons why this has not happened before in New Zealand, although it happened many years ago in Australia, are, in the opinion of the correspondent, the following: (1) The "advanced Liberalism" of Seddon and others which prevented the Labour Party from capitalising discontent; (2) the "country quota" which gives rural areas where the Labour Party is weakest more representation in Parliament than their population entitles them to; and (3) a Labour programme which was too narrow to attract discontented Liberals.

The correspondent puts the position briefly thus: "The Liberals put into operation a programme similar to the immediate objective of many Labour parties in other countries."

In other words, the kind of reforms introduced by Liberals in New Zealand are not essentially different from those aimed at by Labour parties and introduced by them in Australia.

Now, owing to the depression, and a more astute and less rigid vote-catching policy, the possibility exists of a Labour Party victory, provided, however, that capitalism is still in depression when the general election falls due in 1935.



It is the old game of ins and outs played by parties all of which lack any mandate to get rid of capitalism.

The New Zealand workers who are now turning to reforms labelled "Labour" instead of "Liberal" will find sooner or later that the result will be a bitter disappointment. Nothing but the abolition of capitalism will solve the workers' problem.

### G. B. Shaw and Karl Marx

In his recent play, "On the Rocks," Shaw puts into the mouth of one of his characters some very flattering speeches about the value of studying Marx's works—tacked on, however, to a jeer about the "Marxists" who have never read Marx.

It would not be fair to say that Shaw himself claims to be a Marxist, he is far too inconsistent to claim to be anything for very long. Sometimes he says Marx "made a man of him," at other times "Marx is out of date." Anyhow Shaw can certainly be classed among those who have too hazy a notion of what Marxism is all about to be either worthy critics or worthy supporters. This came out a few years ago when he offered to tell the National Clay Convention at Buxton what historical materialism means. The following are some of Shaw's remarks, taken from a report in the *Town Crier* (Birmingham, August 8th, 1930):—

You ought to read Karl Marx more carefully, by the way, because you won't gather from the newspapers the things he taught.

Karl Marx would have said . . . if you will show me a single article made by the potters of any particular period, and if you will show me the tool with which it was made, I don't require to read anything about that article or that tool. I will tell you what the religion of that time was, what were its politics, its literature, art and social customs, because they all stand on that economic basis—the basis of practical industry.

Now whatever this doctrine is, it is certainly not Marxist and bears hardly any relation to it. On the face of it the whole "theory" is absurd. Neither Marx nor Shaw nor anyone else could substantiate a claim to such powers of divination, and hardly anyone but Shaw would have the effrontery to put this stuff across.

Doubtless the Clay Convention thought it was all nonsense but had not the courage to challenge a glib speaker with a national reputation like Shaw's.

Let us assure them that Shaw was quite wrong and that Marx was not, as Shaw tried to make him out to be, a boastful charlatan.

It is hardly necessary to say that a letter to Shaw criticising his distortion of Marx was not answered or even acknowledged.

### Marx and Shakespeare

After Shaw, Mr. St. John Ervine, who borrows many of Shaw's vices. Writing in the *Observer* (December 17th) he ridiculed the attitude adopted by some of the Bolsheviks towards literature in general and Shakespeare in particular. He rightly dismissed as nonsense the attempts to classify literary products as "proletarian" and "bourgeois" according to the political views of the writer. (Incidentally in a recent list of writers drawn up by a Communist organisation Anatole France appears among the "proletarian" writers, and Shaw among the "bourgeois.")

When, however, Mr. St. John Ervine leaves the Bolsheviks and comes to Marx he is all at sea, as he usually is whenever he airs his lack of knowledge of Socialism and Socialists. To associate Marx and Engels with the Bolsheviks in their silly attitude towards Shakespeare shows just how rash Mr. Ervine will be when he thinks he can get away with some peevish abuse, for it just happens that Marx was a life-long admirer of Shakespeare. Lafargue, in his personal recollections of Marx ("Karl Marx," by Ryazanoff, Martin Lawrence, 1927) tells us that Marx regarded Æschylus and Shakespeare

as the two greatest dramatic geniuses the world had ever known. For Shakespeare he had an unbounded admiration. He had made an exhaustive study of the English playwright whose lesser characters, even, were familiar friends. There was a veritable Shakespeare cult in the Marx family, and the three daughters had much of the Bard's works by heart. Shortly after 1848, when Marx wished to perfect his knowledge of English (which he could already read well), he sought out and classified all Shakespeare's most characteristic terms of phrase.

Anyone who has read Marx's works will be aware that his frequent quotations and allusions show his familiarity with Shakespeare's plays.

Shaw and St. John Ervine are both of them examples of the way good material can be partly spoiled by the capitalist conditions under which they work. No human being can write books and plays any more than he can produce boots and shoes without owing much to the co-operation of others. The one thing above all others needed by such men as Shaw and Ervine in order to keep their work closely in touch with the social conditions and ideas of the world in which they live, is constant contact and criticism. Shaw and Ervine both got this in their early days at street corners and in lecture halls. Financial success now saves them from this, and helps to make them to that extent less fit to appreciate and interpret what is around them. Now they both bask in the sunshine of "admirers only." They can avoid or ignore critics who could help to keep them in touch with social affairs. Their judgment and their works are the poorer in consequence.

H.

### Death of Another Comrade

It is with deep regret that we have to record the death, at the age of 32 years, of Comrade Harry Milton. He died from cancer of the lungs in Bethnal Green Hospital on December 25th.

The passing of the years accustoms us to expect news of the deaths of those elder comrades who, active in the past, retire after long and ardent devotion to Party work, and become but names to the new generation, and in the end pass from the struggle for good. But with the young and active the loss is more intimate and more of a shock.

Comrade Milton joined the Party in March, 1927. Almost immediately he became an active propagandist and later was appointed secretary to the propaganda committee. Whilst acting in this post he spoke at practically all the Party's London outdoor meeting places, addressing sometimes as many as eight and nine meetings in one week. He often addressed three meetings on a Sunday at different ends of London, perhaps involving seven or eight hours' speaking. The time he spent on active propaganda work did not prevent him from discharging his duties as propaganda secretary with competence. In 1931 he presented the Annual Conference with a report of the year's propaganda activities as detailed and comprehensive as perhaps any that has been given, and was commended by Conference.

About eighteen months ago, in pursuance of his employment, he went to Sheffield. The following extract out of a letter from a comrade illustrates the esteem in which he was held there.

Although he was a member of this branch (Sheffield) for only a few months, he made a decided impression upon them and also upon numerous sympathisers and opponents.

Last winter he made several journeys to different places in Yorkshire in the endeavour to spread the Party's message and literature. Though dogged persistently by ill-health, he never spared himself if he thought there was an opportunity of striking a blow at the enemy.

Harry Milton chose to spend himself in the service of his class on its highest plane. He will be remembered with respectful affection by many of us in Sheffield.

This letter expresses the feelings of all who knew Comrade Milton.

The interment took place on Tuesday, January 2nd, at Leytonstone cemetery.

We extend our sympathy to his parents and other relatives.

### WHY CAPITALISM WILL NOT COLLAPSE . . .

Owing to the continued demand for this pamphlet a further supply has been printed

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### Some Interesting Quotations

The American poet and essayist, R. W. Emerson, writing about the condition of England in 1847 and 1848, when he paid a visit to this country, had some interesting things to say about the use of "labour-saving" machinery and the antagonism between workers and employers. Many of his observations have a distinctly modern flavour. The quotations which follow are taken from an essay on "Wealth" from a volume called "English Traits."

After referring to the inventions of Hargreaves and Arkwright, which had increased the output of cotton spinners, he continued:—

"But men would sometimes strike for wages and combine against their masters, and much fear was felt lest the trade should be drawn away by these interruptions and emigration of the spinners to Belgium and the United States. Iron and steel are very obedient. Whether it were not possible to make a spinner that would not rebel, nor mutter, nor scowl, nor strike, nor emigrate. At the solicitation of the masters, after a riot near Manchester, Mr. Roberts undertook to create this peaceful fellow, instead of the quarrelsome fellow God had made. After a few trials he succeeded and in 1830 produced his self-acting mill, a creation the delight of mill-owners, destined to restore order among the industrious classes; a machine requiring only a child's hand to piece the broken yarns. The power of machinery in Great Britain has been computed to exceed 600,000,000 men, one man being able by the aid of steam to do the work which required two hundred and fifty men to accomplish fifty years ago."

"By these new agents our social system is moulded. By dint of steam and money war and commerce are changed. Nations have lost their old omnipotence; the patriotic tie does not hold."

"But a man must keep an eye on his servants, if he would not have them rule him. It is found that the machine unmans the user. A man should not be a silk-worm nor a nation a tent of caterpillars. The robust rural Saxon degenerates in the mills to the Leicester stockinger, to the imbecile Manchester spinner, far on the way to be spiders and needles. The incessant repetition of the same hand-work dwarfs the man, robs him of his strength, wit, and versatility to make a pin-polisher or a buckle-maker.

"Presently in a change of industry whole towns are sacrificed like ant-hills when the fashion of shoe strings supersedes buckles or cotton takes the place of linen. England is aghast at the adulteration of food, of drugs, and of almost every fabric in her mills and shops; finding that milk will not nourish, nor sugar sweeten, nor bread satisfy, nor pepper bite the tongue, nor glue stick. This, too,



is the reaction of machinery, but of the larger machinery of commerce. It is not, I suppose the want of probity, so much as the tyranny of trade which necessitates a perpetual competition of under-selling."

"The machinery has proved like the balloon, unmanageable, and flies away with the aeronaut.

"Steam from the first hissed and screamed to warn him. But, harder still, it has proved to resist and rule the dragon, Money, with his paper wings and Chancellors and Boards of Trade. Pitt, Peel, and their Parliaments, and their whole generation adopted false principles and went to their graves believing they were enriching the country which they were impoverishing. It is rare to find a merchant who knows why a crisis occurs, why prices rise or fall, or the mischief of paper money. In the culmination of national prosperity, in the annexation of countries; building of ships, depots, towns, in the influx of gold and silver it was found that bread rose to famine prices, the yeoman was forced to sell his cow and pig, his tools, and acre of land, and the dreadful barometer of the poor rates was touching the point of ruin.

"We estimate the wealth of nations by what they do with their surplus capital. A part of the money earned returns to buy schools, libraries, hospitals, mechanics' institutes and other charities and amenities. But the antidotes are frightfully inadequate and the evil requires a deeper cure, which time and a simpler social organisation must supply. England, too, is in the stream of fate, one victim more in a common catastrophe."

A. SMITH.

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**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington, Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.**—Secretary, M. Sandy, 269, Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1. Branch meets every Friday at 7.30 p.m. at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road).

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# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[Monthly, Twopence

*Look back and  
ask if any of  
the many . .  
powerful . .  
endeavours to  
prevent . . .  
changes ever  
succeeded.*

J. F. BRAY

## Austrian Workers' Tragic Heroism

Workers all over the world have been moved to admiration by the heroic resistance of the Austrian workers, fighting in defence of their trade union and political organisations. These men were organised in a party to which we are opposed, a party whose policy we know to be wrong, but that should not, and does not, prevent us from welcoming the spirit in which they defended themselves. Their conduct is a proof that the working class can produce men and movements as tenacious, and possessed of as much endurance and integrity, as anything the ruling class can show, despite the manifold advantages of their position.

The fighting in Austria began on Monday morning, February 12th, at Linz, where, according

to the official account, Social Democrats resisted with rifle-fire a move by police and Heimwehr to occupy their headquarters. On the previous day the Heimwehr — the armed organisation of Anti-Hitler Fascists—after frequent conferences with Dr. Dollfuss, in whose government they are strongly represented, had decided upon the

dissolution of all municipal councils controlled by the Social Democrats (including the Council of Vienna), and on the suppression of the Social Democratic Party. The Social Democrats were well aware that their hour had come; they must either yield without resistance, or face the whole power of the State and the Heimwehr. The attack had long been threatening and the Social Democrats had prepared for it months ago by notifying all members and branches that in any one of several eventualities (*e.g.*, an attempt by the Government to occupy the Vienna City Hall), all members and branches were to take the initiative of a general strike without awaiting further instructions. This was to prevent the Party and the trade unions from being disorganised by a sudden seizure of their headquarters and the arrest of their officials.

Immediately the news came of the events in Linz the leaders in Vienna met to consider their course of action. They were only too well aware of the military weakness of the workers in face of the armed force at the disposal of the Government, and were in favour of waiting until the Government made a further declaration of policy, expected that day, regarding the Heimwehr threat to the municipal councils. However, for reasons which will be explained later, the workers were no longer prepared to accept the advice of the Executive Committee of the Social Democratic Party. They took the initiative themselves. Trams, trains, newspapers, a large number of factories, and the electric light and gas plants were brought to a standstill, but the strike was not by any means general.

The Government had all its plans ready and promptly declared martial law. It seized the

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City Hall, arrested Social Democratic leaders, and commenced a powerful attack on the barricades, trenches, blocks of flats, and other buildings which the workers' defence corps (declared illegal a year ago) had occupied. The defence corps retreated from the centre of the city to working-class quarters, where they hoped to be able to defend themselves.

The workers were terribly hampered by the Government's full control of communications. Different areas even of Vienna were completely isolated by troops. The workers inside these areas had no means of communicating with those outside owing to the military barriers and the seizure of the telephones. The Government was thus able to make the fullest use of wireless broadcasting as a means of discouraging and dividing the workers. They hit upon the clever scheme of broadcasting the deliberate lie that Bauer and Deutsch, two prominent leaders, had fled to safety in Czechoslovakia. The effect of this on the Social Democrats can be well imagined. The workers at Linz tried in vain to seize the broadcasting station. The workers were also hampered by the arrest the previous week of local leaders of the Workers' Defence Corps, and by shortage of even light arms and ammunition—the Government had been confiscating these steadily during the past year.

That the workers had arms in their possession at all is a sufficiently unusual circumstance to require explanation.

In most cases the arms were those brought home at the end of the war when the army supported the Republican overthrow of the Monarchy. It is stated that some other arms and munitions were smuggled from abroad in recent months. The Social Democrats had no artillery, only rifles, machine-guns, and some hand-grenades, while the army, the police, the Heimwehr, and other Government-armed bodies, were immeasurably better equipped. Without any loss of time they began the assault on the workers' strongholds in various parts of Vienna and other towns with field-guns, howitzers, armoured cars and armoured trains. From all accounts the Government used aeroplanes only for purposes of observation, and one newspaper report states that, at Linz, two aeroplanes were even used by the Social Democrats to distribute propaganda leaflets.

Heavy fighting went on not only in the Capital, but in Linz, Steyr, Graz, Innsbruck, and other provincial centres. Women took part in the defence as well as men, and a number were killed.

For four days and nights the fighting continued with terrible losses on the workers' side. Hour after hour their barricades and the buildings they occupied were smashed and blown up by artillery. It was not sentiment, but the provisions of the Peace Treaty which deprived the attackers of heavy artillery, or the destruction would have

been even worse. These politicians, with Christian and patriotic phrases on their lips, released this inferno on their own Austrian fellow citizens, men, women and children, during a time of peace. The gallant military men placed artillery in position to fire on the tenement houses in which there were women, children, and bedridden persons, and opened fire without giving them an opportunity to escape. They had taken the precaution, too, to place their artillery at a safe distance—out of range of the rifles and machine guns of the Social Democrats.

The Government was probably surprised by the vigour of the defence, which, perhaps, explains their declaration on the opening day of the struggle that they had it well under control. On the other hand, this may have been a deliberate lie, like many other statements they issued. The Social Democrats gained some minor successes here and there for a time, but only before the full strength of the Government forces had been brought to bear. Never at any time had the Social Democrats the slightest chance of success, unless backed up by a revolt in the regular army. This was rumoured, but falsely. (The one English newspaper which gave colour to reports of a Social Democratic victory—*The Daily Herald*—was the journal which, a few months since, was hailing Dollfuss as the defender of democracy!) The struggle was not even a forlorn hope, for there never was any ground for hope.

It was a desperate and spontaneous decision to be crushed fighting rather than to be crushed without that gesture of defiance. As one Social Democratic leader wrote in Vienna during the struggle, it was, in effect, an unequal battle between "old rifles and a few cartridges" on the one side, and artillery and machine-guns on the other. Prince Starhemberg, Heimwehr Commander, himself commented on the poor equipment and deficient military leadership of his Social Democratic opponents. He said that at Linz, the workers had only rifles, 15 machine-guns, and a few hand-grenades—no match at all for trained troops with artillery and abundant ammunition and small arms. (The Prince expressed his profound admiration for the courage of his defeated opponents, and nobly tempered his class hatred by hoping that the captured leaders would be shot instead of hanged!)

One lie needs to be nailed, that is the Dollfuss Government's defence that it was resisting a plot to seize power.

True it is that the Party and the trade unions had determined beforehand to try to resist suppression, but there is not the slightest evidence to support the Dollfuss story. So ludicrous was it that several correspondents of British newspapers went out of their way to expose it.

For example, Mr. John Segrue, special corre-

spondent of the *News-Chronicle* in Vienna, says (February 17th):—

Vice-Chancellor Fey . . . organised the plan that goaded the workers into resistance. Last Sunday, in a speech at Strebersdorf, near Vienna, he told the Heimwehr that Dr. Dollfuss was "one of them," and added that he intended to begin work in earnest against his enemies on the following day.

. . . the workers' movement was one of resistance, not of "rebellion."

The Editor of the *Economist* (February 17th) takes a similar view. So plainly was this the case that the *Times*, in an editorial on February 13th, openly regretted that the Heimwehr had succeeded in preventing Dollfuss from coming to an arrangement with the Social Democrats.

The cold-blooded nature of the attack on the workers, organised and planned by the Government and the Heimwehr, can be seen from the fact that, on February 9th (i.e., three days before the attack began), Leopold Kunschak, leader of the Christian Social Party on the Vienna Municipal Council, proposed that his party (that is Dollfuss's own party) should collaborate with the Social Democratic Party in order to avoid a continuance of the inflammable situation then existing throughout the country. This was at once agreed to by Dr. Danneberg, speaking for the Social Democrats, and by the Social Democratic Mayor of Vienna, Karl Seitz.

Instead of accepting the proposal, Dr. Dollfuss hastily gave a press interview, on February 10th, brushing it aside and proclaiming the Government's intention to carry out "unchanged" the plans it had made. Major Fey repeated this.

Dr. Dollfuss deliberately refused even to meet representatives of the Social Democratic Party—the largest single party in Austria—while the fighting was in progress, although he knew they wished to arrange a peaceable settlement, subject only to the Party and the trade unions not being suppressed. Dr. Dollfuss and Major Fey had decided that workers' blood must be spilled and wantonly went on with their plans to bombard the blocks of flats with artillery.

### The Penalty of Defeat

What price the Austrian workers have paid, and have yet to pay, for their armed resistance it is impossible to say. Estimates of the deaths among the defenders vary from a few hundreds to nearly 2,000. Dr. Dollfuss says only 241, but this may be another piece of propaganda, no more reliable than the official broadcasts during the fight. A number of executions have taken place, and imprisonments and confinements in concentration camps are expected on a wholesale scale. Also the Dollfuss Government has declared the trade unions and Social Democratic Party illegal (this was expected, anyway) and, with the capitalists' notorious disregard for the rights of the workers to any little property they may possess, has con-

fiscated the funds and premises of the suppressed organisations. He has also imitated Hitler down to the last dishonesty of stealing the workers' paper, the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, and continuing its publication under the same name, but by nominees of his own, and carrying on propaganda for his party.

If the executions have not been as numerous as intended by the victors, this is due to the protests by foreign ambassadors. That Christian gentleman, Major Fey, promised "hangings all over Austria," and celebrated the victory of his troops by engaging more hangmen.

The first prisoner who was hanged was badly wounded—which outraged some of the foreign newspaper correspondents. They might, however, have recalled the similar execution of James Connolly in Dublin, in 1916, at the hands of the British Government.

Before dealing with the events which brought the Social Democrats to their present position, it will be useful to explain some of the parties and forces operating in Austria.

### Parties and Forces in Austria

The Government is a coalition between the Christian Social Party (Dr. Dollfuss, Chancellor), the Fascist Heimwehr (Major Fey, Vice-Chancellor) and certain smaller groups. Major Fey is Commander of the regular army and police and works in close co-operation with Prince Starhemberg, who commands the Heimwehr, an officially-supported party-army upwards of 40,000 strong and practically equal to regular troops.

The Christian Social Party is strongly Catholic, and is composed largely of peasants, but with a fairly strong working class wing. The peasant element of the Christian Social Party and the so-called "Middle class" in the towns, lean towards the Fascist Heimwehr, while its working class wing and the poorer peasants were disposed to co-operate with the Social Democrats in the defence of Parliament and the Republic.

The Heimwehr declares itself frankly Fascist, differing from Hitler only on two points, opposition to Nazi doctrines about Aryan racial superiority and opposition to Austria being united with Germany. The Heimwehr are financed and supported by Italy.

Then there are the Nazis, financed and supported from Germany, who want union with Germany.

Both Heimwehr and Nazis, and the Heimwehr sympathisers in the Christian Social Party, favour suppression of the trade unions, and the abolition of Parliamentary Government.

At the 1930 General Election the Christian Socials obtained 35 per cent. of the votes, the Social Democrats 43 per cent., leaving only a small minority of votes to be divided among the Land-



bund (a small agrarian party supporting Dollfuss) and the Heimwehr and other small groups.

With the rise of Hitler in Germany the Christian Socials have lost heavily both to the Heimwehr and to the Nazis, and at the Provincial elections in 1932 their vote in Vienna was only 20 per cent., compared with 60 per cent. given to the Social Democrats. The latter are a reformist party based on the trade unions and having a programme rather like that of the I.L.P. a few years ago, but dressed up in more Marxian terms and showing a somewhat better grasp of the workers' position. Their conception of Socialism does not go beyond State control of banks, industry, etc. The Social Democrats have their chief strength in Vienna and provincial towns, but are weak in rural areas. They, too, have lost some support to the Nazis in recent months.

Owing to the weakening position of the Christian Socials and the growing strength of the Heimwehr and Nazis (both threatening and preparing for armed revolt with foreign aid—from Italy and Germany respectively), Dollfuss has had to look for support outside his party. At one moment a year ago it seemed as if he might be willing to follow the advice of the democratic wing of his party and seek Social Democratic support. Whether he intended to do so or not, and whether if he did, it was ever more than a manoeuvre directed to crushing them later, it is impossible to say. In any event, the Social Democrats were in a difficult position. If they supported Dollfuss they feared losing the confidence of the more independent groups of workers.

Dollfuss decided, however, to turn to the Heimwehr, who, although weak in voting strength (perhaps 20 per cent. of the votes) are strong in arms due to Italy's support.

Among the economic factors influencing the parties are the following. The peasants have been hit by falling prices and demand lower taxation and lower wages, ends which they hoped to achieve by crushing the Social Democratic Party and the trade unions. Hotel keepers and others dependent on tourist traffic, particularly near the German frontier, favour the Nazis, because union with Germany, or, at any rate, a cessation of the present strained relations with Germany, would restore to them the German tourist traffic at present prevented by the German Government. Army officers and ex-army officers, and many groups of professional workers, look hopefully to a restoration of the monarchy as a provider of jobs—they therefore support the monarchist groups in the Heimwehr and Christian Social Party. As an offset to Germany's bait of restored tourist traffic, the Government and the Heimwehr are trying to arrange Italo-Austrian-Hungarian commercial and customs treaties.

The working-class supporters of the Christian-

Socials and the Nazis are to a considerable extent attracted simply by the promise of jobs and promotion. Quite a large part was played by this factor in the Fascist movement in Italy and the Nazi movement in Germany. Unemployed and other workers join these movements because they are promised appointment to Government and other posts rendered vacant by the dismissal of Social Democrats when once the Fascists get power. Dollfuss has been pursuing this line busily during the past year and thousands of dismissals are now taking place.

One factor which may prove of some importance, but is of minor importance now, is that Dollfuss is trying to strengthen three other small armed militias in order to lessen his dependence on the Heimwehr. It remains to be seen whether he will succeed or whether the Christian Socials will be gradually pushed aside by their Heimwehr allies under the pressure of the efforts of the Nazis to set up a pro-Hitler dictatorship.

Many observers, including two principal leaders of the Social Democratic Party, anticipate that the violent suppression of their party and the trade unions will drive many former Social Democrats over to the Nazis.

The ironical position has arisen that the Nazi Movement in Germany is broadcasting appeals to the Austrian workers to rally round Hitler as the defender of Socialism and of the working class against the brutal tyranny of Dollfuss and the Heimwehr!

In spite of the Russian Government's pose that it is the defender of the working class everywhere, it appears to have maintained an attitude of "correct diplomatic neutrality."

### The Social Democrats

Let us now attempt to weigh up the weak points of the Social Democrats' position.

The first point to notice is that the Social Democratic Party in Austria was a reformist party, although superior in many respects to its counterparts in Germany and England. Its supporters have been won by its programme of reform demands and by its efforts to carry them out (for example, its large-scale housing schemes in Vienna). It has itself helped to encourage the propaganda for union with Germany, which has lately caused it to lose some of its support to the second of the two Fascist movements, the Nazi movement.

From 1918 onwards, until last year, one plank in the official programme of the Social Democrats and of the trade unions was to seek union with Germany. On the rise of Hitler this point was suddenly dropped, but no organised movement can escape the consequences of years of mistaken activity by suddenly renouncing it. Many workers who had been encouraged to believe that unity with Germany mattered, have continued to believe it—

going over to the ranks of the Nazis. Then, again, the Social Democrats supported the War and took part in the Coalition Governments of the early post-war years, co-operating to stabilise the capitalist republic—with some of the very people who have crushed them now that their help is no longer needed.

Lastly, being built up on the confused doctrines of reformism instead of on a clear understanding of Socialist principles, the Social Democratic Party found itself faced with a dilemma from which there was no escape. The leaders have for years preached the need to strive for so-called practical, every-day reforms, as stepping-stones to a distant Socialism. But in order to justify this position they had also to claim that the achievements were in themselves of great value. They had to tell their followers that the housing schemes of Vienna, and the various other little gains and liberties, were vital inroads into capitalism and must be defended at all costs. Consequently, when the Government finally made a frontal attack on the Vienna Council the Social Democrats had either to fight or else admit that these things were not worth fighting for. To do the latter meant renouncing the doctrines of a lifetime of propaganda, and was unthinkable. Yet the fact remains that it is not worth while for a workers' movement to go down in suicidal glory for the sake of the nominal control of part of the machinery of local government.

Neither in Austria nor anywhere else have the workers' organisations made any serious inroads into capitalist control. The only way of doing so is for a party solidly based on Socialist knowledge and conviction to gain control of the machinery of Government, national and local, including the armed forces. Attempts by a minority to seize power by force of arms against those who control the Government and the armed forces, or attempts to resist the Government, are always foredoomed to failure except in the rare and exceptional event of the armed forces themselves going over to the workers. Therefore, a workers' movement which understood the nature of power would never get itself in the false position occupied by the Social Democrats. It would never imagine that it had crippled capitalism and overawed the ruling class when in reality it had only been invited into a nominal share of the Government in order to tide over a period of transition during which the capitalists were not sure of their grip on the situation.

Then again, a well-grounded movement would never have cherished the illusion that Austrian workers could ignore the Great Powers and the neighbouring countries. Austria is the cockpit where Italy and Germany are fighting out their commercial and territorial rivalries, with France, England and Czecho-Slovakia also playing a hand.

It has long been said that France for various reasons had exacted a pledge from Dollfuss that he would not suppress the trade unions and Social Democrats, and it is certainly curious that the attack on them followed sharply after the overthrow of Daladier's Government in France.

Italy, as a result of the peace treaties, had gained much territory and had pushed Austria-Hungary—Germany's close ally—off the Adriatic Sea. If Germany were now to absorb the much-diminished Austria, a German drive towards the Adriatic would again have to be feared by Italy, not to mention the likelihood that Germany would seek to regain the German-speaking territories taken by Italy from Austria. In this situation the Italian Government supplies money and arms to the Heimwehr, and is alleged recently to have promised Dollfuss unlimited support against the Austrian Nazis, on condition that he first smashed the Social Democrats and trade unions. Dollfuss, as abject a figure as MacDonald, has carried out his part of the bargain.

Against the armed forces of the Government, backed up by foreign powers, the Austrian Social Democrats, becoming weaker in numbers, and weaker even in the matter of small arms, under the constant Government searches and confiscations, had no defence. The international trade union and labour movement was helpless to do more than pass resolutions and now to collect a little money for the victims.

Realising the hopelessness of armed resistance, the Social Democratic leaders urged the workers to ignore the Government's deliberate attempts to provoke them, and tried to play for time. Again and again they offered conditional support to Dollfuss and offered to give up their arms if he would disarm the Heimwehr. Their very willingness to give Dollfuss no excuse was one of the factors which made the workers' weak forces still weaker at the final clash, for, as a Social Democratic Leader explains in the Press report issued by the "Labour and Socialist International" (February 18th), many workers became very dissatisfied with the executive's attitude. When, therefore, on February 12th, the executive again counselled delay, the workers acted on their own initiative, thus losing what advantage there would have been in a more unanimous action, and giving Dollfuss a slight tactical advantage in the chance to argue that he was resisting a plot to seize power.

The truth is, as was pointed out in these columns in June, 1933, when dealing with the Austrian situation, that a party which struggles for a series of reforms is bound to be divided at the moment of crisis—those on one side counselling another coalition in order to safeguard the reforms already won, while those on the other side urge independence and resistance. It was true, then, as we said, that the Austrians faced a problem to which



there was no solution. A better understanding among the Austrian workers could not have turned defeat into victory, but it would have prevented the illusion being held that armed resistance was a practicable possibility. They would have realised the hard but inescapable truth that the first step is to win a majority, and that, when that is done, there is still no road to Socialism except through the control of the machinery of Government, including the armed forces, and that the Socialist movement must be organised internationally.

We admire the great courage of the Austrian workers and only regret that they should have been in a position in which such heavy sacrifices were demanded without the possibility of commensurate achievements. H.

### The Problem of the Small Shopkeeper

Lord Beaverbrook, who says that Fascism must be sternly resisted, and Lord Rothermere, who says it is the only solution, have joined hands to deal a stout blow at the Co-operative Movement, and are obligingly writing articles in each other's papers about the iniquity of co-operative stores ruining the little shopkeepers.

The two lords are noted for their political stunting and for their frequent startling reversals of policy, and the present campaign shows them, as usual, wildly disregarding of consistency. Lord Beaverbrook, for the past three years, has loudly clamoured for higher wages, on the ground, among others, that higher pay means more money to be spent at the counters of the stores which advertise in his columns. He also found it a useful stick with which to beat the Labour Government early in 1931. He now makes a major point in his indictment of the co-operative stores, that they also have reduced the pay of their staffs. Yet Lord Beaverbrook finds no difficulty in associating with Lord Rothermere, whose papers have always been foremost in defending every wage-cut there ever was, and which now oppose the restoration of the 1931 "cuts," which Beaverbrook supports.

Lord Beaverbrook denounces the co-operatives because they dabble in politics. A trading concern, he solemnly says, should not be allowed to go in for politics. Lords Beaverbrook and Rothermere themselves are interested in trading concerns, their newspaper companies. Do they keep out of politics? On the contrary, as everybody knows, politics, their own personal ambitions, their wire-pulling and political back-biting, are the life-blood of their newspapers.

Then Lord Beaverbrook declares that the co-operative stores are to be condemned on two grounds: (a) That their prices are higher than those of the small traders, and (b) That the co-operatives have an unfair advantage in being able to return

to their customers at the end of the year a "dividend on purchases." It should be apparent to Lord Beaverbrook that if, in fact, co-operative store prices are higher than those of private traders, then the "dividend on purchases" merely represents the accumulated savings of the customers. They pay more for the goods and in due course get the excess back again. If that were all the difference between the co-operatives and the small traders then the latter could help themselves quite simply by starting similar schemes for saving up their customers' spare cash.

The real trouble between the co-operatives and the small traders is a quite different matter. The gist of it is that the small trader is small, and the co-operatives are becoming mammoth capitalist trading concerns, just like any other.

That is where the shoe pinches, and Beaverbrook and Rothermere have observed it. They have learned from Hitler the political value of exploiting the resentment of the small trader at his extinction by the chain store and department store, and—also like Hitler—they have seen the wisdom of directing that resentment in a quarter least harmful to themselves, i.e., against the co-operatives. Logically, of course, Beaverbrook and Rothermere should march determinedly, not only against the co-operatives, but also, and mainly, against all the big battalions, Boots, Woolworths, Marks & Spencers, Selfridges, Harrods, Imperial Chemicals, Unilever, the London Passenger Transport Board, and so on. They do not do so because that would rouse too much and too powerful opposition, and would directly harm their Lordships by cutting off revenue from the advertising of the products of those concerns in their pages. The moral would appear to be that the co-operatives should pay for immunity by placing big advertisements in the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Express*. As they have recently taken a whole page in the *Daily Telegraph*, perhaps that is what the co-operative directors are going to do.

Before leaving the subject of the small trader and the big store, a candid declaration made by Mr. Gordon Selfridge deserves to be rescued from obscurity. In an address broadcast to a conference on retail distribution, held at Boston on September 18th, 1933, he said that both in U.S.A. and Great Britain there are "too many retail shops." (See report in *Daily Herald*, September 19th.) What he thought about small shopkeepers was this:—

This surplus of shops is an uneconomic proposition, and most of these inexperienced managers or owners are attempting to do work for which they are unfitted either by temperament or ability.

Small shopkeepers who have faith in Beaverbrook and Rothermere should ask their Lordships if they will publicly denounce Mr. Selfridge, and if not, why not.

A few words about the forerunners of Lord Beaverbrook and Lord Rothermere may also serve

to show the danger of trusting to the promises of politicians that they will turn back the march of large-scale industry. Ten years ago, and twenty years ago, the Labour Party was vigorously defending the "little men" against the "great soulless corporations." "Down with monopoly" was their battle-cry. As Mr. Clynes put it, a short twelve years ago, better a large number of small capitalists than a small number of large ones.

But capitalism marched on unheeding, and one day the Labour Party found itself in office, saddled with responsibility for tackling the problems of capitalist adjustment to changing economic conditions. At once the defence of the small man became inconvenient, and by the time the Labour Party entered office again, in 1929, the old coat had been turned inside out. It had been discovered by Mr. Herbert Morrison, Mr. Bevin, the late W. Graham and others, that monopoly is the salt of the earth. All the Labour leaders, except a few who resented this volte-face, now preached salvation by public utility corporations.

So now the small shopkeeper is looking to new groups of politicians, Hitler and Dollfuss, Rothermere and Mosley, to save him, but in that quarter the old game of broken pledges is proceeding merrily. Rothermere and Beaverbrook have no intention of attacking their own big-business friends, and Hitler, before being in power a year, was already explaining away his unwillingness to demolish the German chain stores and departmental stores.

That, however, is the affair of the small shopkeeper, not of the Socialist movement. What is our affair is the need to repudiate the charge put forward by Beaverbrook and Rothermere that Socialists support co-operative big business against the small shopkeeper. The co-operative movement (which, incidentally, is so unlike the dreams of its founders as to be almost unrecognisable) and the Socialist movement are as chalk and cheese. We have not the slightest interest in the efforts of the co-operative movement to extend its business organisation. Some workers may find co-operative "divi" a convenient method of saving, but, as a movement, it never will or could bring emancipation any nearer. It can thrive only by accepting and imitating capitalism. It can never bring the workers more than a few crumbs from the capitalist table.

As Socialists we do not gloat over the personal tragedies of the wiping out of the small shopkeeper any more than we do over other tragic effects of ruthless capitalism. What we do say, is that Lords Rothermere and Beaverbrook have no intention whatever of setting back the clock of capitalist development in order to retrieve the fortunes of the small man. If they have, let them show it by retiring from the fight in which their newspaper combines crush out the small local newspaper.

Lords Rothermere and Beaverbrook appear to have devised an astute plan for boosting circulation and delimiting their respective interests. They agree to disagree about Fascism, they agree to co-operate about the co-operatives, they agree to be dumb about the other big stores which advertise in their columns, they agree to disagree about higher wages and restoring the "economy cuts," and, above all and all the time, they are completely silent about capitalism and Socialism, except to gloss over the evils of the one and misrepresent the other.

The appeal of Socialism is primarily to the workers, that is, to all who live by selling their mental and physical energies, their labour-power, to an employer, for it is our class which provides and will provide the driving force towards Socialism.

At the same time we point out to those groups of "small men" trying to maintain a precarious and often illusory independence against large-scale industry and commerce, that there is no salvation for them under capitalism. As individuals their place is within our ranks, when they recognise that the prime need of our age is the abolition of the private ownership of the means of production and distribution, and the establishment of Socialism, and when they are prepared to work with us to that end. H.

### This Month's Quotation.

The passage quoted on the front page is from "Labour's Wrongs and Labour's Remedy," by J. F. Bray (page 12), published in 1839.

### CORRECTION

#### "Bolshevism, Past and Present"

Owing to a misapprehension it was incorrectly stated in the January SOCIALIST STANDARD that the writer of the article "Bolshevism, Past and Present" is a member of the Workers Socialist Party, U.S.A.

### The 30th Annual PARTY CONFERENCE

will be held on

Friday and Saturday, March 30th and 31st

at

FAIRFAX HALL,

STANHOPE GARDENS, HARRINGAY, N.

(1d. Bus or Tram from Finsbury Park Underground Station)

Commence at 10 a.m.

OPEN TO ALL

### The Annual PARTY RE-UNION

will take place in the above Hall on

Good Friday, March 30th, at 7.30 p.m.

Doors open 7 p.m.

Tickets from any Branch Secretary, or from any Member of the Social Committee at Head Office,

Price 1/- each

(Enclose 11d. Postage with each order)



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

MARCH,



1934

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

## TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Twelve Months, post free .. .. .	2s. 6d.
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## Woe to the Vanquished

The Labour parties in different countries that go under the names of Communist or Socialist, in spite of the futile nature of their reform policies, are, as a rule, an expression of the discontent of the more advanced workers. In spite of the trickery and place-hunting of leaders the rank and file is made up of many who are prepared to give up their all in the defence of ideas and parties that they believe will bring an end to working class suffering.

The civil struggles that have become such a common feature of social life on the continent of Europe during post-war years are instances of two important problems that the capitalists as a class are endeavouring to solve. On the other hand, they want to cut down the huge state expenditures, much of which is looked upon as an unprofitable employment of money by large sections of the capitalists who object to some of their brethren living upon them, and, on the other hand, they want to curb the dangerous tendencies of working class discontent.

For both purposes they require a stronger and more centralised state power, free as far as possible of party strife.

During the building up of this more centralised state power different groups of capitalists endeavour to exploit the movement for their own ends. Hence the bewildering welter of warring parties with apparently conflicting aims. Upon one question, however, these capitalist parties are united, and that is on the need to crush out anything that suggests an attempt by the workers to lift from their shoulders the burden of exploitation. It is for this reason that antipathy to "Marxism" is a

prominent feature of all these capitalist movements. The name of Marx is synonymous with the class struggle and Socialism. Hence the ruthless means employed against individuals and organisations that pay court to Marx—even when his name and ideas have been taken in vain—by those who for a while obtain the spoils of power.

The ferocity of the repressive measures is often the offspring of panic on the part of the ruling class, who, fancying their privileged position challenged, let loose the feelings of the jungle and savagery has its way.

There has just been an example of this in Austria during a struggle that has been long anticipated. The struggle was provoked by the Government with a cunning that is familiar, and of which we had an example here during the War, when the bulk of the men of this country were brought into the army and the munition works by the skilful use of Derby Scheme and Conscription Acts. The Austrian Government has recently made no secret of its intention to crush out the Social Democratic Party and the haste with which it brought into use artillery against the workers makes glaringly evident the grimness of its determination. The Government intends that the lesson shall be salutary and that neither women nor children, neither the aged nor the non-combatants, are safe from its ferocity when they let loose the revengeful guns.

While the guns were still booming the gallows were put up and the executions began in haste lest the opportunity might slip by that was provided by the excuse of unbridled passion.

The dispassionate savagery behind the directing of the guns was illustrated by the fact that in the midst of the strife the cessation of the bombardment by artillery was ordered in one of the districts of Vienna because damage was being caused to valuable property—and this was done while the artillery continued to blow to pieces even women and children who were cowering in terror in the blocks of working class flats that were the centre of the chief bombardment! Let the workers remember such incidents.

Whatever we may think of the mistaken policies of the Austrian labour movement we have nothing but admiration for the Austrian workers who put up such a determined if despairing struggle against the attempt to destroy their organisations.

As was obvious from the beginning, the Austrian Government have been successful in their object. Many working class homes mourn the death or the mutilation of participants in the struggle. The destruction of their organisations is being pursued with vigour and mercilessness.

The Austrian ruling class have been successful. They believe they will stamp out all tendency to revolt against exploitation. Their success, however, can only be temporary. The fire they have

smothered will smoulder and break out again later on. When it does so, we hope that the Austrian workers will be guided by greater knowledge than they have been in the past, and will base their movement on a policy that has for its single object the abolition of the private ownership of the means of production and the establishment of Socialism.

## Birth Control and Poverty

The knowledge of birth control is a necessary part of personal hygiene, and its merits or demerits from a health point of view must be judged by the individual concerned.

That this personal and intimate subject has to be decided from an economic point of view by members of the working class is only more evidence of the rottenness of capitalist society.

We Socialists desire to see every man and woman equipped with all the knowledge that can make their lives decent, dignified and pleasurable. We will not, however, lend ourselves to mis-statements and wrong conclusions in order to gain favour and support. It is the contention of the advocates of birth control that this practice will lead to a higher standard of living and enhanced comfort for the workers. First of all, is the reasoning sound that argues that abstention from producing children brings added comforts to the individuals concerned?

If this was so we would expect to see France, a country where the knowledge of birth control is common; leading the world in the standard of comfort of its workers. On the con-

trary, there is poverty and unemployment in France as elsewhere. Furthermore, the argument would have to have for its basis the fact that there was a definite shortage of necessities of life and that additional popula-

tion would menace the interests of those already here. Is this true? Most decidedly not. Wheat, coffee, fish and rubber are among the commodities which have been destroyed and restricted recently. President Roosevelt is granting his blessing to a scheme which aims at putting huge tracts of American land out of production because the country has been glutted with agricultural produce (see *News-Chronicle*, January 1st, 1934). This shows that members of the working class are too poor to purchase goods which are already here in abundance. Surely the logical thing to do, from a human point of view, would be to feed this "surplus population" on this glut of commodities? The Governments, however, prefer to destroy the goods in the belief that by so doing they are keeping up prices.

The plea for birth control rests on the fact that the markets of the world are flooded with commodities which cannot be absorbed and until these are used up or fresh markets found there is a lessening demand for the workers' labour power. Instead of advocating Socialism, which offers the worker and his family economic security, the birth controllers see no solution except in reducing the

number of the population, so that the workers may cause the master class as little embarrassment as possible. Actually, however, it would not have this result. The worker, with the aid of machinery,

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



can produce far more than his individual requirements and it is this surplus that the master class must dispose of in order to realise their profit.

The majority of the women of the working class do not realise their class position in society. When in industry the woman is a wage-slave, just as the man. When she marries, although she leaves the industrial field for that of the home, her interests are bound up with her husband's. Low wages for him means an intensified struggle for her. Unemployment for him means a terrible job for her to try and provide sustenance out of the meagre relief obtained for the family. As a rule, this is looked upon just as ill-luck and she usually reflects the mentality of her spouse in whatever political views he happens to adopt. The small family, with possibly increased leisure, will not bring emancipation to the woman. Socialism alone will do that. The S.P.G.B. realises that the women of the working class have got to understand the Socialist case before we can get Socialism. Birth control, family allowances and kindred measures are so frequently put forward by people wrongly calling themselves Socialists that only correct understanding will prevent women from following these will-of-the-wisps calculated to appeal to their easily aroused sentiments.

It is never deemed necessary, by birth control organisations, to instruct the bright young things of Mayfair upon birth control. To members of that class the question remains in its proper place as that of personal hygiene. It is curious to note, however, whenever marriages are celebrated between people of wealth or title, that after the correct interval the babies appear regularly and methodically until all chance of the illustrious family name dying out has disappeared, then the babies stop, and Milady, having done her duty, proceeds once more to her pleasure.

We see, then, that the practice of birth control is only advocated as an economic necessity for members of the working class.

We say definitely that it will solve no working class problem. It is an expedient upon which statesmen and parties climb to popularity. Mussolini and Hitler are examples of statesmen who are using the reverse side of the picture for their own ends. Hitler, with his motherliness and, recently (a form of birth control), the sterilisation of the unfit, coupled with the replacing of women in industry by men, is trying desperately to stem the tide, and he may succeed for a time. The laws of capitalist development will, however, throw fresh problems upon his hands. The workers may be receptive of his ideas for a time, but when Hitler fails to deliver the goods the motherliness campaign will go phut! The same applies to Mussolini and others. The capitalist class employ the cheapest labour and women will once more be re-absorbed in those branches of industry where their employ-

ment is profitable to the employers. Birth control is only another dodge to blind the workers. It, and kindred reforms, do nothing but scratch the surface. The S.P.G.B. is opposed to advocating reforms, because reforms do not alter the basis of capitalist society. We are told by Enid N. Roberts, in the *Listener*, November, 1933, when describing the appalling conditions of an unemployed man and his tuberculous family, that "the fundamental cause of such conditions is obviously the lack of knowledge of birth control among the poor." Further on she says, "Lack of knowledge of birth control methods is the basic problem which confronts the poor."

She does not perceive that the cause of working class poverty is the fact that they are wage-slaves. That, in order to live, they have to sell their labour power to a master. He pays them in the form of wages just that amount which will enable them to feed, clothe and shelter themselves and their dependents. If the worker does not have a family, or if by the advent of birth control it becomes the usual thing to have small families, then the wage of the worker will be adjusted accordingly. Wages that were based upon the needs of a family of six or eight will be based upon the smaller units.

Birth control, then, can be shown to offer absolutely nothing in the way of increased security and well-being for the majority of the workers under capitalism. To discuss the question from the point of view of eugenics hardly comes within the province of a political party. The intelligent person adopts or rejects birth control measures in accordance with their individual needs or ideas. These views can certainly not be set up as a social scheme which can solve the problem of poverty and insecurity, which are the workers' share under capitalism. MRS. O.

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Leyton Branch, £1; G.B., 5s.; West Ham Branch, £4; A.C.T., 6d.; J., 6d.; H.N., 6d.; R.B., 2s. 6d.; C. Alex, 3s. 7d.; G. Can, 2s. 6d.; Br. Clark, 2s. 10d.; C.E.F., 6d.; Central Branch, £1; M. Cole, 7s. 6d.; Rissi, 2s. 6d.; W.G.F., 10s.; Liverpool, 3s. 3d.; G.F.H., 1s. 3d.; R.M., 17s. 6d.

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## Notes by the Way

### Profits Rising Again

The table below is the *Economist* record of average rates of profit and dividend declared during 1933 and previous years. It will be noticed that the rate of profit rose during 1933 to 6.1% after falling to 5.8% in 1932:—

	Ratio of Profits to Pref. and Ord. Capital.	Average Dividend on Preference Capital.	Average Dividend on Ordinary Capital.
	%	%	%
1909	7.4	4.3	6.3
1910	8.2	4.5	7.0
1911	9.9	4.9	8.5
1912	10.2	5.2	8.5
1913	11.7	5.1	10.2
1920	15.2	5.0	12.6
1921	10.3	5.2	10.2
1922	7.0	5.2	8.4
1923	9.8	5.3	9.3
1924	10.3	5.4	9.8
1925	10.9	5.5	10.3
1926	11.3	5.4	11.1
1927	10.5	5.3	10.8
1928	11.1	5.4	10.6
1929	10.5	5.5	10.5
1930	9.8	5.7	9.5
1931	7.2	5.2	7.2
1932	5.8	4.2	5.9
1933	6.1	4.6	5.8

The figures for 1933 and other recent years are based on the returns of nearly 2,000 companies.

The average dividend on ordinary capital is slightly lower in 1933 than in 1932 (5.8% compared with 5.9%). The explanation of this is, that, although the companies' reports showed larger profits, they allocated a larger percentage of the profits to reserves and declared a slightly smaller average dividend on ordinary shares.

### Christianity and Politics

The events in Austria show up in a striking way the position the organised Christian religion occupies when it comes into politics and the uselessness of Christian doctrines to curb the violence of adherents fighting for property rights. The party to which the Austrian Chancellor belongs, the Christian Social Party, is a definitely religious body, giving prominence to its Christian beliefs. Not only the Heimwehr, but also the other three officially recognised auxiliary forces which helped in the attack on the workers, the Sturmscharen, the Catholic Freiheitsbund, and the Christlich-Deutschen Turner, are avowedly religious bodies.

After one Heimwehr leader had announced that they proposed to turn Austria into a Christian

State it was another, Major Fey, who promised "scores of hangings all over Austria" and engaged more executioners. It was reported that this promise of a "Christian State" was followed immediately by an exodus of Jews fleeing from the implied threat of pillage and persecution.

### The General Strike

While a more or less general stoppage of work, for a definite brief period, may in certain circumstances serve as a useful demonstration or as a support for a wage movement, it hardly needed the failure of the Austrian general strike on Monday, February 12th, to be added to the long history of general strike failures to show how utterly useless is this weapon for the purpose of establishing Socialism or resisting the attacks of those who control the political machinery and armed forces.

Yet Sir Stafford Cripps could draw no other lesson from the Austrian debacle than that the British workers must be prepared to back up their opinion with "general mass strike action." (*Times*, February 19th.)

### Sir Stafford Cripps and Sir Oswald Mosley

A book has just been published dealing with Sir Oswald Mosley's party, the "British Union of Fascists" ("B.U.F., Oswald Mosley and British Fascism"). It is written by a Mr. James Drennan, who is said to be Mr. W. E. D. Allen, for some years a close associate of Sir Oswald Mosley, first in the new Party, now in the B.U.F.

Mr. Drennan points out the strong resemblance between the proposals for the reform of the machinery of Government advocated in 1931 by Sir Oswald Mosley and those now put forward by Sir Stafford Cripps and the "Socialist League." *The Blackshirt*, Mosley's paper, goes so far as to accuse Sir Stafford Cripps of having picked up these notions from Mosley.

This may or may not be true. A much more likely explanation is that they both picked them up from the same source, the Labour Party and I.L.P.

It is significant that at a large number of the Fascist street-corner meetings in London the speakers are ex-Labour Party members, ex-I.L.P.'ers, or ex-Communists—frequently all three. Some of the theories that have been advanced by the I.L.P. for nearly 40 years are now being refurbished by Fascist speakers and offered to their audiences; the same hoary old appeals for "action, not words," the same denunciations of bankers and politicians, the same argument that it is a defect in the machinery of Government which prevents Parliament from "doing something"—nobody ever explains what it is that the M.P.'s are supposed to want and can't get.



It is a pity that the young men and women who are supporting Mosley should be taken in by such stuff, for they are often of a far better type and better able to form a useful opinion than the speakers to whom they listen with such trustfulness.

### Mosley, the "Leader"

Those who are acquainted with Sir Oswald Mosley claim that he is "sincere, but ambitious," and that he and his wife, the late Lady Cynthia Mosley, were genuinely shocked when they first realised the condition of the workers. They were genuinely anxious to do something about it. Granted that this is so, the political and economic problems of the modern world call for much more than sympathy and a desire for action. They call for thorough understanding, which cannot be got without study and not even with it if the study is on wholly wrong lines.

We reject the idea of leadership, but, putting that aside, what are Mosley's credentials for occupying the position of leader as conceived by the Fascists? He is offered to us as a leader, with absolute authority to guide our footsteps to the New Jerusalem.

What is his record? In 1918 he was elected as a Coalition Unionist at Harrow. In 1922 he had broken away and was re-elected as an Independent. In 1923 he was re-elected again, but now as a Labour M.P.

In 1924 he again stood as a Labour candidate, at Birmingham (Ladywood Division), but was defeated. At about this time he became a leading member of the I.L.P. and took a hand in producing some of the reports of that Party's Finance Enquiry Committee.

He stood as Labour candidate at Smethwick in 1926 and was elected, and again in 1929.

Then, after a short period as a member of the Labour Government, he resigned in disgust at their failure to do what he wanted with regard to unemployment.

In 1931 he was defeated at Stoke-on-Trent, when he stood as a New Party candidate.

Before very long the New Party was given up and Mosley came out a full-fledged Fascist.

He and his speakers claim that he has learned by his experience, but what has he learned? He is now demanding action, and says his party is a party of action, but he said precisely the same about the Labour Party and I.L.P. when he was in them. Even when he left and formed the New Party he and his associates still claimed that they stood for the Labour programme and were criticising the leaders primarily for not carrying it out.

Mosley has fought on six programmes in sixteen years; constant change but without any evidence of increasing understanding.

Is it conceivable that a man who can be led up the garden, first by the Conservatives, then by the Labour Party and I.L.P., then by the 200-year-old political theories of Bishop Berkely dished up in the New Party, then by the hotchpotch of gradualist-Communist jargon of the ex-Labour leader, Mussolini, is really a fit and proper person to give guidance to the workers?

Is such a man yet really competent to form a considered judgment of his own, let alone act as a guide for millions of others?

### Nation, not Party

One of the arguments put forward by the Mosley speakers is that the "old gang" parties, Liberal, Labour and Tories, put party before nation, if not they would all get together at a round table and formulate a common national programme of action.

Strangely enough there are three or four separate and violently antagonistic Fascist movements in this country. Why do they not unite?

When recently two of these parties came together at a public meeting (at Trinity Hall, Great Portland Street, on November 24th), it was not to sit at a round table but to fight. If there had been a table, round or square, it would doubtless have shared the fate of the chairs, which, according to an eye-witness, were "nearly all smashed" when the believers in "nation, not party," had finished agreeing with one another.

### The Nazi Movement—Three Characteristics

Three characteristic features of the Nazi movement are its idealisation of the "small man"—the shopkeeper, small landowner and farmer, and its worship of youth against age, and of action against theory.

A handbook issued by the bureau of the Reichstag (see *Times*, February 22nd) contains information about the 639 Nazis elected to the Reichstag last year. Most are by profession Government officials, small landowners and small farmers. Although the Nazi movement has a large working class following, there are few Reichstag members drawn from the working class. In this, of course, it resembles the Liberal and Tory parties.

Secondly, the Nazis pride themselves on being a *young* man's party as well as a *man's* party. (It is, however, amusing to notice that the latest recruit to British Fascism—millionaire Lord Rothermere—is aged 66; that the leader of one British Fascist organisation was Colonel Barker, a woman masquerading as a man; and the founder of another was a woman, as is also a prominent financial backer of a third.)

Most of the Nazi Reichstag members are between 30 and 40 years of age, and 54 are under

30, which constitutes a record in the history of the Reichstag—young men about to show that they can make a mess of the world as ably as their elders.

Thirdly, the Nazis pride themselves on their emotionalism and contempt for knowledge and theory, thus falling into line with the tradition of the I.L.P. and Labour Party in their year-long criticism of Marxism and the S.P.G.B. How often in the past 30 years have Marxists been told by the I.L.P. that what is needed is not knowledge and understanding but an "emotional upsurge"? Herman Neef and other Nazi leaders make similar claims for their movement. In a speech delivered in January, Neef made the following characteristic remark:—

"National-Socialism is not a matter of the intellect but of the heart and emotion."

### Dr. Schacht Reassures the Capitalists

The German Nazi movement is running true to type. It got into power by extravagant promises, and its leaders are now busy thinking up excuses for the non-fulfilment of the promises. To attract the workers the Nazis called, and still call, themselves "Socialists," meaning by that some vaguely defined State capitalism. They also made a special point of denouncing bankers and the banking system, as do the Fascists here. But when Dr. Schacht, President of the Reichsbank, spoke at the Kiel Institute for World Economics, on January 26th, it was to explain that the Nazis had no intention whatever of interfering with the foundations of capitalism. The whole of the passage is worth recording:—

Dr. Schacht declared that radical attacks on interest rates, fundamental opposition to capitalism, and complete State control would not be features of German banking policy. There would be a return to the sound banking principles on which pre-War German banking had been built and which the world had abandoned in the post-War years. The main task would be the reconstruction of a sound and flourishing capital market.

It was a reform in the outlook of bankers which was the first condition in the National Socialist plan: they must realise that their task was to serve the community. To attack capitalism was senseless; capital was an indispensable factor in the economy. Only by the efforts of the individual could the capital needed by the State be built up, and those efforts must have their reward in interest. "The attempt to break the tyranny of interest rates" would simply mean that lenders of capital must be preserved from working against the interests of the people. The abuse of capitalists and lenders only disturbed confidence. (*The Times*, January 27th, 1934.)

The voice was that of the official representative of the Nazi movement, the movement which promises the workers "Socialism in deeds," but the words and ideas might be those of Lord Snowden defending "financial purity," or any other Labour leader installed in office and unable to think of anything to do about the evils of

capitalism except go back to "those sound principles" on which capitalism and its evils had been built up.

### General Strike in France

On Monday, February 12th, the French trade union federation (C.G.T.) called a general strike "against the menace of Fascism and for the defence of public liberties."

It was decided in advance that the strike was to be a demonstration strictly limited to 24 hours.

Labourites ("Parti Socialiste de France") and Communists both supported the stoppage of work, and on the whole the strike was well organised and free from disturbances. Essential public services, such as water, gas and electricity, were not stopped, and the railways, by arrangement, stopped for a few minutes only. In Paris there were no buses or newspapers, and the postal, telephone and telegraph services were at a standstill. Shops were shut, docks and many factories and mines were idle.

Thousands of workers took part in demonstrations.

The Government decided to take no provocative action, but there were 35,000 troops held in readiness in Paris, and power plants, gas and electricity works and public buildings were strongly guarded by police and troops. Army and navy men were drafted into Paris in large numbers to replace telephonists out on strike.

### Dangerous Theories of Spanish Workers

It did not take long for the Spanish workers to discover that the capitalist Republic is hardly distinguishable, as far as concerns them, from the capitalist monarchy which they overthrew with such high hopes a year or two ago.

At the first general election after the setting up of the Republic the Spanish Socialist Party (a reformist body) obtained 117 seats out of 470, and three of their representatives entered the first provisional Government in coalition with various other parties. This Government carried through a large number of political and social reforms, including the drafting of the Republican constitution, a democratic electoral system, education acts, company acts, and acts permitting trade union organisation under more favourable conditions than formerly. Among the principal measures was the Land Reform Bill, distributing land to the peasants and labourers. For this purpose nearly three million acres were taken from the land-owning noble and from persons charged with rebellion. The new occupiers of the land are not to be owners, but tenants of the State.

As soon as the objects for which capitalists and peasants had supported the Republic were partly achieved, they could dispense with the aid



of the workers' organisations. Accordingly the coalition Government was broken up, and at the general election in November, 1933, the Labourites obtained only 61 seats and the Communists one.

Many of the leaders of the trade unions and Labour, Communist and syndicalist organisations, are now threatening to try to seize power by strikes and armed revolt. Any such attempt will be a tragic error, worse in its results than the resistance of the Austrian workers. They are a minority and in an appeal to arms they are bound to be defeated and crushed in the long run. H.

### NOTICES OF MEETINGS & LECTURES

All meetings are open to non-members, admission free. Questions and discussion are welcomed.

**HEAD OFFICE.** Meetings will be held at Head Office on Sunday evenings at 7.30 p.m. March 4th, "The Jewish Problem," S. Goldstein; March 11th, "The Rise and Development of Trade Unionism," G. Bellingham; March 18th, "The Paris Commune," S. Stewart; March 25th, "The State—Its Rise and Purpose," Sandy.

**AN ECONOMICS CLASS**, conducted by D. Goldberg, will be held at Head Office each Wednesday evening at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.** Meetings will be held at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street (corner of Guilford Street), W.C.1, Friday evenings at 8.30 p.m. as follows:—March 2nd, "The Stock Exchange," Com. James; March 9th, "Fascism: Its Rise and Influence," Com. Kohn; March 16th, "The Paris Commune," Com. Stewart. On March 23rd a regular meeting of the Branch will be held, but on the 23rd and 30th there will be no lectures, due to the Annual Conference taking place.

**WEMBLEY.** Meetings will be held at 375, High Road, Willesden (nr. Pound Lane), on Sunday afternoons at 3.30 p.m. as follows:—March 4th, "William Morris and Socialism," E. Kersley; March 18th, "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific," Robertus.

**AN ECONOMICS CLASS**, conducted by A. Kohn, will be held at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, each Wednesday evening at 8 p.m.

**HACKNEY.** Old Gravel Pit Hall, Valette Street, E.9. Tuesdays at 8.30 p.m. March 6th, "Life and Teachings of K. Marx," S. Cash; March 13th, "Life of William Morris," S. Stewart; March 20th, "General Strikes," Cameron; March 27th, "Political Aspects of the French Revolution," A. Reginald.

### SHEFFIELD

Sheffield readers are invited to a Lecture and Discussion at THE FRIENDS SCHOOL (Room 10), HARTSHEAD, at 7.30 p.m., on Monday, March 12th

**"The Futility of Reform" - G. H. Southgate**  
Admission free. All invited. Questions and Discussion.

### WHITECHAPEL LIBRARY

A meeting will be held at WHITECHAPEL LIBRARY on Friday, 16th March, at 8.30 p.m.

**"The French Revolution" - A. Reginald**

### WHY CAPITALISM WILL NOT COLLAPSE . . .

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### The Art of Debunking

This article, like many another in this journal, is devoted to the debunking of illusions. I find, on reference to my slang dictionary, that to debunk is to "knock the stuffing out of."

Having made that clear, I propose to explain what the illusions are, and then start straight away on the debunking process—a delightful pastime, with which no special apparatus is required—only a little grey matter and a little knowledge.

We, as Socialists, do not appeal to sections of the working class as a rule. The terms, "working classes" and "middle class," mean nothing to us. All who have to sell their labour power in order to live are wage slaves, and in our Socialist propaganda we do not have to differentiate between those workers with horny hands and those with shiny pants.

But all politically unenlightened workers have illusions of one kind or another, and our business is to sweep these cobwebs away and to put straight thinking in their place. There are thousands of members of the working class who might almost be said to subsist entirely on a diet of self-deception, glasses of milk, and bath buns. You may meet them in those gems of modern architecture, the popular teashops, between one and two in the afternoon.

Most of them have nice clean hands, shiny seats to their trousers, and a lot of worry. Many of them are bald-headed at forty-five, and in their box by sixty. Quite often they live in "nace" districts known as suburbs. They live, often, in red-brick villas, which, to anyone at all alive to the pleasures of architecture, are a plague and an eyesore. These villas stretch mile after mile, like a red rash, over the once fair countryside, and, on their clattering little wooden gates, one reads, with monotonous regularity, the legend: "No Hawkers, No Circulars."

The rooms inside these pearls of the builder's craft are seldom large enough to swing the proverbial cat. Not that that matters much, for often there isn't enough food in the house to feed the family decently, let alone keep a feline parasite in idleness and luxury.

These people are the "little men" of the popular Press. They believe in the Empire, prosperity round the corner, and the sanctity of the family. Once a week they have a couple of hours of machine-made pleasure at the local movie-house. In they go, clutching their ninepence in one hand and their walking-stick in the other; out they come, drugged by spurious sophistication and sticky sentiment into believing that life for them is really worth living. Shadowy, soothing syrup draws a veil over the real world. Their shoddy little suburb becomes a world of night clubs, naughtiness, saloon cars and seductions.

The most excruciating Hollywood junk, produced often with considerable technical ability, becomes a substitute for life.

Capitalism has produced many strange types, but none more pathetically ridiculous than these. Often they possess a smattering of what passes for culture. They read modern novels from the public library, though they usually avoid those nasty writers with disturbing social theories. The theories may be right or wrong, but these folk have been properly brought up, and they are suspicious of theories. If you start theorising, especially about human society, you might start wanting to alter things radically, and that would never do.

Now, these people, clerks, provision store managers, shopwalkers and what-not, are members of the working class. They are members of that huge economic category which includes tailors, carpenters, navvies, bricklayers, scientists, engineers, artists—in fact, all those who sell their labour power to the master class. Consequently, they are material for Socialist propaganda. It would be incorrect to say that they are so steeped in illusion as not to recognise the obvious fact that they are workers. But, all the same, huge numbers of them make a snobbish distinction between themselves and what they call "common people." (Common people being weavers, coal miners, and the like!)

Let us see where some of these illusions come from. Our ideas in general reflect our social environment, and our social environment embodies the existing forces or factors which can influence our thinking. Often our thinking is objective—that is to say, we see things more or less as they are. All of us are agreed that to jump from a fifth-floor window may be a short cut into the street, but we know from our experience that gravity, the weight of our bodies, and the hardness of the pavement are facts which combine to make such an experiment fatal. So we choose the slower, but less messy, method of using the stairs and the front door. Our idea and our consequent behaviour are in line with our experience. We think objectively.

But if we, by virtue of the fact that we live, say, in Edgware, work in an office, wear a bowler hat, and say "yars," instead of plain, common "yes," or "yus," delude ourselves into thinking that we are in a different economic category to factory workers, then we deceive ourselves. Our thinking is then "subjective."

This subjective thinking is, to us Socialists, a tremendous obstacle. Behind it lurks all kinds of petty snobberies and cranky ideas. Behind it lurks the self-deception of the worker who believes himself to be "a little lower than the boss class, a little higher than the factory hand." This is the kind of nonsense we Socialists must "debunk."

But, it may be asked, if ideas come from our social environment, how can this self-deception be explained? The answer is to be found in the addled thinking deliberately and artfully fostered by the capitalist Press, the cinema and the church. Open any capitalist newspaper. You will find that all of them play the game of flattering and lulling the sedentary workers into a state of self-satisfied coma. Every leading article, nearly every item of news, practically every advertisement, is designed to appeal to the snobbery already referred to.

The clerk finds (much to his surprise, one would think), on opening his *Daily Mail*, *Morning Post*, etc., that "he" owes money to "America." That "he" is staggering under a load of debt amounting to something like the banking account of Croesus or Henry Ford. Do the odd cups on the breakfast table, the worn-down heels of his shoes, the hunk of vile yellow shop cake at his elbow, bring him down to earth? Not a bit of it! He gets quite "het up," and, says he to his wife, getting quite red in the face: "These Yanks have had enough of our money, the bloodsuckers! We ought to do something about it." And his wife (quite a nice woman, but admits she doesn't know anything about "this sort of thing") timidly murmurs: "Yes, dear. Hurry, you'll lose your train." He turns another page, and brightens up a little. He finds that "his" trade is improving, that Britannia is once again sitting on top of the world and waving her trident defiantly. Never once does he suspect that society is divided into two classes and that one of them, the master class, has been sitting on top of *him* for years, and years, and years.

So he lives, year in and year out, a sordid unsatisfactory life, as far removed from life as it can and will be lived in time to come as that of the poorest slum dweller. Society, to him, is not the peoples of the earth, organised for the purpose of obtaining a livelihood. The only interpretation of the word he knows is that which is implied in the *Talk of the Town*, and *Society Chit Chat*. The limit of his theorising about it is to wonder who "Mr. A.," the co-respondent in Lady Hogsbottom's divorce case, really was.

Benjamin Drage is his patron saint, canonised in Suburbia, and weekly payments are his votive offerings. What a life!

But he will learn. He and his kind will become comrades with us in the struggle for Socialism. Of that we are sure. All the illusions on earth, all the dope, and Press, and pulpit, and cinema, cannot prevail against the slow, but sure, accumulation of experience. Capitalism digs its own grave, because it teaches us, whether we like it or not, and that in spite of all the frantic efforts of its lackeys to petrify things. Capitalism, in the long run, moulds our ideas and makes us



into revolutionary material. It digs its grave, and our job is to shovel the earth in by achieving social revolution. Apt in this instance is the brilliant phrase of Marx: "Man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life and his relations with his kind."

JIMMIE CAMERON.

### The Socialist Party of Great Britain AND QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

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# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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London, April, 1934

[Monthly, Twopence

*So long as  
people are  
ignorant, . .  
compromise .  
plus sentiment  
always looks  
better to them  
than the real  
article.*

WILLIAM MORRIS  
(1834-1896)

## The Labour Party and the London County Council

It is a curious circumstance that the forcible removal of the Austrian Social Democrats from the Vienna City Council was followed within a month by the entry of their British counterparts into control of the London County Council for the first time. The major issue before the voters in London was the same as that on which the Austrian party was elected and kept in office, the problem of housing and slum clearance. By promising to build more houses at low rents and to clear away slum areas, the London Labour Party, under the leadership of Mr. Herbert Morrison, managed to get about 340,000 votes against 300,000 cast for the Conservatives and 23,000 for the Liberals. They now have a com-

fortable majority on the Council and have three years in which to try to carry out their pledges and prepare for the next election.

The position of a party controlling local councils while an opposing party controls the central Government is a dangerous one for reformist parties. In a country like Great Britain, where the control of finance

and the armed forces is strongly centralised, the capture of a local council means little in itself, because the central Government is always in a position not only to enforce the existing narrow legal restrictions on the local elected body, but—if need be—to alter the law so that the restrictions are made narrower still or the powers entirely abolished. If we were dealing with the control of a local council by Socialists elected solely on the demand for Socialism, the position would be understood by the voters and no difficulty for the party would arise. The voters would know that while the control of the machinery of local Government will be a useful support for Socialists when they control the machinery of central Government, control of local councils alone does not open up the road to Socialism. Such control would be valued by Socialists for its propaganda value and for the part it would play in the larger scheme of control of the machinery of Government. There would, therefore, be no possibility of Socialist electors expecting great present benefits from capturing the L.C.C. or any other body, and no danger of them turning away disappointed when benefits failed to accrue. With the reformist parties the situation is different. The workers who voted for Social-Democratic candidates in Vienna, or Labour candidates in London, expected two things: firstly, that the reform programme would be carried out, and, secondly, that this would materially improve their position. On the first point the Austrian Social-Democrats can claim that they did their best to fulfil their pledges, and there is no reason why the London Labour Party should not carry out many of its promised housing schemes.

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That, however, is only half the problem. It is the second part that is fatal to the reformist parties. The Austrian party erected its huge modern flats for Viennese workers, and hired them out at very low rents, far lower in many cases than would have been charged by private builders.

The flats were subsidised by the Vienna municipality, the cost being raised by taxation, largely from landlords. This, on the surface, looks like a gift to the tenants in the flats, and so it has been understood by the superficial admirers of the Vienna scheme to be found in the I.L.P. and Labour Party. Actually, the workers gained little or nothing financially, for, with a lowered cost of living, the employers were able to reduce wages without making the workers less efficient wealth producers. The subsidy was not a gift to the workers, but a levy on one section of the propertied class, to be handed over, indirectly, to the industrial capitalists. A similar position happened in Germany and elsewhere, as testified by the International Labour Office in a report published in 1925: "The Workers' Standard of Life in Countries with Depreciated Currency."

The result was that the hardships of the Austrian workers were not materially lessened, and they were in exactly the same subject position after long years of Social Democratic rule as they were before. That is one of the reasons why the Social Democrats were losing members to the Austrian Nazis during the past 12 months, under the attraction of new and more seductive promises.

Mr. Herbert Morrison will find that the same causes will have the same effects in London. Not that we expect to find him three years hence manning machine guns at the County Hall, but that those who voted for the Labour programme will turn from it sooner or later when they realise that its fulfilment does not solve their problem of poverty and insecurity—in short, when they find that capitalism goes on in very much the same way as before.

One feature of present-day local elections in Great Britain is the small number of voters who trouble to use their local vote. Whereas in 1907 some 55 per cent. voted, in the present election it was only a little over 30 per cent. This, of course, makes the tenure of office of the Labour Party still more precarious. If they do anything whatever to rouse the fears of the apathetic thousands of Conservatives and Liberals who did not go to the poll this time, at the next election these voters will be stirred into activity and the small Labour majority will be swamped. On the other hand, unless the Labour Party makes some show of activity its own supporters will drift back into apathy again.

Other features of the election call for com-

ment, the first being the calm way in which the leading Conservative newspapers took the "victory for Socialism." Although they declared in their usual misleading fashion that the Labour voters had voted for "Socialism," their placid acceptance of it showed that they knew they were lying. The *Times*, for example, devoted its comments largely to chiding its own party for faulty organisation, inactivity, and, in particular, for its inadequate housing programme.

It was noticeable how little support the I.L.P. and Communists obtained. Their total vote was less than 7,000 and, in most areas, it was only a tiny percentage of the votes cast for Labour and Tory candidates. The Communist, Saklatvala, formerly M.P. for Battersea (which he won only because the Labour voters then had no candidate of their own and voted for him), polled 577 votes in the present L.C.C. election, against 8,334 Labour votes and 4,549 Tory votes.

Another interesting feature is provided by the leader of the Labour Party, Mr. Herbert Morrison. After the crisis of 1931 many of the Labour Party leaders, including Mr. Morrison, and also all the I.L.P. and Communist leaders, lapped up the silly theory that capitalism could afford no more reforms, with the consequence that the workers would be driven to accepting the revolutionary position. Now, one by one, they are recovering their nerve and their sense of proportion and are entering the fight again with the same old list of reform measures. They do it, of course, for the reason that they cannot win elections any other way, and reformist parties cannot live unless they are always able to hold out to their members the prospect of early electoral victory. Hence we find Mr. Herbert Morrison, who so recently told us that "the Labour Party must place Socialism in front of social reform, and must achieve much more clean-cut, reasoned Socialist propaganda," (*News Chronicle*, August 2nd, 1933), leading his army to victory in the L.C.C. election behind a programme in which, as usual, social reform was everywhere and Socialism nowhere.

Now, one last word for those who believe that reforms are stepping stones to Socialism, and those who believe that what they call "revolutionary reforms" lead to revolution. The Social Democratic Federation held these views half a century ago and, among the points in its programme of palliatives, was one calling for the "compulsory construction of healthy dwellings for the people, such dwellings to be let at rents to cover the cost of construction and maintenance alone." After all these years of wasted efforts leading to no tangible result, and helping Socialism not at all, even the modest demand for "healthy homes" is as far from satisfaction as ever it was, and still the "practical" men of the Labour Party, and the mock revolutionaries of the

I.L.P. and Communist Party can think of nothing better to do than fight elections on such issues. H.

## The Mirage in Spain

From recent reports Spain appears to be well on the road already trodden by other European countries. Somewhat similar circumstances have thrown up similar groups and catchwords and the leaders of labour are making the same mistakes and marching to their doom with a blindness that would almost drive one to despair.

The economic development of Spain has been such that, until recent years, it has not favoured the rise of a strong capitalist class or a considerable body of proletarians in the modern sense of the term, although the mass of the people have been poverty stricken. The helm of state has been controlled by a small group of nobility in alliance with the Catholic Church.

During the 19th century the industrial and commercial development of Spain was unimportant. In fact, so backward was it that the mass of the people were illiterate, and even to-day half of them can neither read nor write. An economically privileged nobility and clergy had control of political power and reduced the majority of the population to a low level of existence by grinding taxes and tributes of various kinds.

There was a professional element that drew their ideas from the more advanced countries and strove to fit on to the country a political system out of harmony with the economic framework. Periodically there were revolts, sometimes instigated by dissatisfied sections of the ruling group, sometimes led by the professional element who wished to see Spain take its place with the more advanced countries.

One result of these struggles was the constitutional movement of 1868-76, during which a republic was proclaimed so weakly founded that, after an existence of three years, it ended with the Constitution of 1876 and the return of the Monarchy. In spite of the collapse of the republic, however, the constitution represented a real advance and was based on liberal views. But the old repressive measures and the control by the Church of education continued. However, the economic development of the country was beginning to gather energy and Bilbao in the Basque Provinces, Barcelona in Catalonia and Valencia were becoming the centres of considerable industrial activity.

The isolated industrial development in departments such as Catalonia, Valencia and the Basque provinces, combined with differences in language and the hopelessness of breaking the wall round the central government developed a movement towards local autonomy. Nationalist movements within the country aiming at separate and autonomous

departments have arisen and anarchist and syndicalist movements have flourished. The nationalist sentiment was the mainspring of the federal constitution of 1931 and the anarchists and syndicalists who joined the unions were the despair of the leaders of the growing labour movement, who modelled their attitude upon that of the leaders of the other European Social-Democratic movements.

During the present century industrial development has made considerable progress and industrial and commercial capitalists have joined in the struggle to obtain political influence. The capitalists objected to the commercial competition of the Catholic Church (which took part in ordinary industrial ventures) and to its freedom from taxation. They also objected to the heavy cost of an overgrown and inefficient bureaucracy and mismanaged military expeditions. In short, they had reached the time when they wanted a political apparatus cleared of antiquated rubbish and fitted to meet the needs of modern conditions.

While the Monarchy existed it represented the tyranny of the past and people of all shades of opinion could unite against it under the slogan of Republicanism and settle their differences afterwards. The dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, in 1923, was a belated attempt to save the old order by keeping down some of the disruptive elements. But the dictatorship was expensive and it failed to keep down internal turmoil. It thereby lost what support it originally commanded outside the Church and the aristocracy. The franchise was sufficiently wide for the local elections to show that the aristocratic group were going to be swept away in the elections to the central Parliament, so they took time by the forelock and went before the storm broke.

The movement that ended the dictatorship was the result of an agreement reached at San Sebastian between the Regionalists (the advocates of local autonomy) the Liberals and the "Socialists" which united these groups in a common movement for a Republic.

The Spanish Socialist Party originated in the '80's before there was any large body of wage workers in existence, although there were plenty of poverty-stricken peasants. As the Democratic-Socialist Working Men's Party it was formed at Barcelona in August, 1882, at the National Working Mens' Congress. It was influenced by the movement in France and Germany and issued a Manifesto almost identical with that of the German Social-Democrats. This Manifesto proclaimed the necessity for the Spanish proletariat to seize political power "in order to transform individual and corporate property into common property belonging to the whole community."

At the Annual Conference, in 1884, of the Spanish Working Men there were 120 delegates



present, many of whom were representatives of agricultural labourers.

The growth of the movement was slow, but, in 1904, the party had 10,000 members and obtained 29,999 votes at the Parliamentary elections. The Anarchist and Syndicalist movement considerably hampered its development and there was a struggle for influence in the labour unions.

The industrial crisis following the Philippine and Cuban wars gave the movement a bad setback. The membership of the party and of the labour unions declined.

The war and post-war economic development, during which rapid industrial progress was made in many directions, particularly in transport, coal, electricity and agriculture, gave the party a considerable push and, in the elections after the establishment of the Republic, they became the second largest party in Parliament, with a representation of 117 members out of 475 elected.

The quality of the support given to the party, however, has not taken long to show itself. In the recent elections it was only able to secure the return of 60 members! The reason for its decline is quite simple. It was one of the supports of the Government since 1931 and has had to carry the blame for the conduct of the Government—an inevitable result of alliance with avowedly capitalist groups.

The facts are that the original professions of the Manifesto remained pious ones, and the party occupied itself with the much lauded practical policy of reforms, losing sight of the object originally conceived—on paper, at any rate.

At the moment of writing it is threatened with the same fate that has fallen upon its Austrian counterpart and it is debating the fatal policy of armed resistance.

A situation closely resembling that which occurred in Italy in 1920 now exists in Spain. A minority of the population supporting the "Socialist," Syndicalist and Anarchist groups are considering united action against the Government. The strike fever is spreading and an attempt is being made to bring about a general strike of all workers, with the object of overthrowing the existing system. The ground has been prepared, as it was fourteen years ago in Italy, for the rise of a Fascist movement, and two such groups have been organised and have made rapid progress during the last few months.

The view taken by the Government is illustrated by the following significant quotation taken from the *Observer* (March 18th, 1934):—

A curious commentary on the trend of Spain's Republic is the official announcement of the establishment of permanent concentration camps to hold 3,000 men. The gem of this announcement lies in the statement by the Director of Prisons that "a special camp to hold 150 persons is being erected on the Island of Hierro (Canary Islands), and which will be devoted to writers, authors, journalists, and

suchlike persons." About sixty social prisoners were removed from Madrid Prison this week, and it is understood, although no official statement has been made, that they are en route for the main concentration camp for 1,500 persons which is being hastily prepared on the Island of Lanzarote (Canary Islands), and which will be ready for occupation within fifteen days, according to the Director of Prisons.

The Labour movement in Spain has manoeuvred itself into a hopeless position, and is simply asking for the fate that befel the Italian movement.

GILMAC.

### Dr. Eismann's Last Word

Dr. Eismann, writing in the *Beamtenjahrbuch* (Berlin, February), says his last word on the question of Marxism and the Labour Party. (For previous references to Dr. Eismann, see "S.S." December, 1933, and February, 1934.)

In his present contribution, Dr. Eismann charges us with having abused him, and misrepresented him. He says that he stands by what he said and will decline to discuss the matter further.

What is and what is not abuse is largely a matter of individual taste, and our readers must judge for themselves whether we have abused Dr. Eismann. We would, however, say this: We hold that the Socialist case is correct and can be proved to be correct. We have nothing to gain by burking discussion and we would therefore not wish Dr. Eismann or any other opponent to think that he cannot get a reasoned reply to his criticisms, free alike from abuse and misrepresentation.

We would therefore assure him that he is at liberty to have reasonable space in our columns to put his case, if he wishes to do so.

On the points at issue we have a few remarks to make in the light of Dr. Eismann's present statement. If he were arguing nothing more than that there are inside the Labour Party some individuals or scattered groups of people professing to be Marxists, who are *trying* to influence Labour Party policy in their direction, we would not dream of disputing it. That has always been the case. There have even been such people in the Liberal Party, and there are some in the Nazi movement in Germany. But Dr. Eismann claims more than that. In his present contribution, for example, he repeats the statement that "the agitation of radical groups in the English Labour movement . . . is changing the attitude of the great Labour Party on this point."

We therefore repeat our statement that the Labour Party is a reformist body from top to bottom, and that it is not changing towards Marxian Socialism. The "radical groups" now gaining influence, such as the Socialist League, are not in any respect different from the active and influential so-called "left-wing" groups which preceded them. They are not Marxist in aim,

method, or philosophy, even although a few individuals toy with phrases which they believe to be Marxist.

The difference here between us and Dr. Eismann is one of terms, and it is on that ground that we originally criticised him and the leading Nazis. In his latest article he says that Marxism has two expressions—the Social-Democrats and the Communists. And he concludes that the S.P.G.B. belongs to the Communist tendency. The whole of this conception is a mistaken one. The Social-Democrats (like the English Labour Party) represent not Socialism but reformism, and State Capitalism in various forms. The Communists represent the same main body of reformist ideas, with, however, one outstanding difference. Whereas the Labourites believe in striving for reforms and State control by peaceful and constitutional methods, the Communists fight for the same general objects by methods of violence and minority action.

The S.P.G.B. stands, not for reform and State Capitalism, but for Socialism and nothing else. It is, therefore, equally opposed to both movements.

One thing alone should cause Dr. Eismann to recognise the weakness of his case and the unsoundness of his classification, that is the fact that, during the thirty years of its existence, the S.P.G.B. has never at any time or in any way supported either the Labour Party, the Communists or any other reformist party, nor has it allowed any members to support them. Throughout its history the S.P.G.B. has maintained an attitude of unbroken opposition to both reformist movements. That is one answer to Dr. Eismann's contention that Marxian Socialism can mix with Labourism and Communism.

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The Socialist Party of New Zealand is now publishing its organ, the *Socialist Review*. Copies are obtainable from T. J. Phillips, 16, Hawea Road, Point Chevalier, Auckland, W.3.

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The Socialist Party of Canada is now publishing a Journal, "The Western Socialist." Copies are obtainable from the Socialist Party of Canada, Manitoba Hotel, 194, Market Avenue East, Winnipeg, at five cents a copy; or at 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, at 2d. per copy (2½d. post free).

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### American Reformists in Difficulties

The Socialist Party of America, among many similar organisations, has on numerous occasions acted in the capacity of a "case history" for the scientific Socialist. It has provided an abundance of evidence to support the Socialist contention that a membership which is ignorant of the basic principles of Socialism can never hope to build up an organisation which has as its object the capture of political power, and its use to abolish capitalism and establish Socialism. Such a membership can at best be used for the capture of political power in order to introduce certain reforms, which, in due course prove themselves futile to solve the basic problems which perpetually confront our class. Such an organisation, whilst it can be most active, cannot, because of its membership's political ignorance, go any further in its objectives than the object of its members without undermining the loyalty of such members.

The above contentions are illustrated by an item which appeared in *The New Leader*, organ of the Socialist Party of America, of December 16th, 1933, under the caption "Party Standing Imperilled in California," with also a sub-caption, "Desertion by Sinclair, and Communist Manœuvres cause Confusion in Party." The writer of this news item, a *New Leader* correspondent, opens his article as follows:—

"With the election of Hyman Sheanin as State Secretary of the Socialist Party to succeed Harold Ashe, removed by the State Executive Committee because of recently acquired Communist views, and the desertion of the Party by Upton Sinclair to seek the Democratic nomination for Governor, the Socialist Party in this State faces a new situation. Because of 'united front' manœuvres by Communists and their sympathisers within the party, quite a number of party branches have been more or less divided, some verging on disruption."

This situation is by no means a "new" one in the Socialist Party of America. On several occasions the organisation has been split from top to bottom. Evidence for this can be found in plenty by the student of that party's history. One need only read the work of a Socialist Party member, Nathan Fine, entitled "The Labour and Farmer Parties in the United States, 1828-1928," for such evidence.

The interesting part of the aforementioned article is the attempt to explain the *cause* of this new division in the ranks of the Socialist Party of America. From the sub-caption it would seem that only two factors, the desertion of Upton Sinclair and the Communist manœuvres, were responsible. The writer even stresses the latter cause, the "Communist manœuvres":—

"... This appears to be the result of plotting by Communists, and it has had its effect upon some members who joined the Party in the last several years. These *unschooled* members have fallen victims to certain fears which include apprehension that a



complete collapse of capitalism is just around the corner, that the Fascists are going to get us soon, and that our only salvation is unity of action with the handful of Communists who are active in California. The psychology is for all the world like those party members who in 1919 flocked to the party faction that was coming under the control of Moscow and which was soon talking of 'Johnny get your gun.' (Italics mine.)

These "unschooled members" are not altogether to be blamed for their muddled condition. For, in examining the files of the party organ, *The New Leader*, we find that influential members whom we are to assume are "schooled" have subscribed to these self-same views. If the "unschooled" and newer members were guilty of believing that capitalism is collapsing, so too, were much older members who have had plenty of "schooling." An example of this belief by one of the older members is the following:—

"Four years of industrial chaos, bottomless misery and general despair under Republican administration have amply demonstrated the pitiable incapacity of the ruling classes to prevent a catastrophic collapse of their much-boasted economic order." (Italics mine.) Morris Hillquit, in the "New Deal," November, 1933.

In the same paper, Norman Thomas, standard-bearer of the party for the office of President of the United States, says the following on the menace of Fascism in this country:—

"Moreover, a vote for Socialism this year is a vote against the danger of turning the opportunities which exist under the N.R.A. into a drift toward a Fascist society . . ." (Italics mine.)

Only a week or so back, this organisation called a mass meeting in New York's famous Madison Square Garden, to demonstrate against Fascism in Austria, which ended in both the Socialist Party of America and the Communists demonstrating against each other, with the Secretary of the Communist Party having a chair broken over his head.

Is it to be wondered at, then, that members of this party, with their views on leadership and their hero worship for the two above-mentioned leaders, should take these leaders' views seriously? To these misinformed workers the great stir and stew of the Communists over these questions passes as action, intelligent and revolutionary action, and attracts them.

Once again, too, is the theory of leadership, so dear to Socialist Party of America members, tried and found wanting. Once again after many years of activity in this party, during which time he has enjoyed the admiration and adulation of the membership, Upton Sinclair, the leader, deserts his admirers to join an avowedly capitalist party. His name is added to the already long list of "leaders" who have deserted the Socialist Party of America for more profitable fields of endeavour. Sinclair, in California, joins Paul Blanshard in New York. Both will do their best to put over Roosevelt's "New Deal." Once again, too, does the party cover its shame by a posthumous discovery that what they have lost is no loss at all.

We are informed by the correspondent already quoted:—

"The treachery of Sinclair is quite as damaging, as he also has had an effect upon some unschooled members. Sinclair had formerly posed as a left winger, especially in matters relating to Stalin and his fellow commissars. His seeking of the Democratic nomination for Governor has revealed how shallow his political and economic thinking *has always been*." (Italics mine.)

We are almost tempted to say "sour grapes"! Not alone is it bad enough that this "comrade," who was torn between Stalin, Norman Thomas and Roosevelt, should finally turn to the last-named leader, but what is much worse, he takes with him others of the Socialist Party, who are, in turn, torn between their devotion to that party and Upton Sinclair. For we are informed:—

"The result is that we lose some uninformed members who follow Sinclair, while others come under Communist influence."

After the correspondent has stated what he thinks are the factors responsible for this split in the party's ranks, he then gives the real clue to understanding this condition:—

"Old time comrades who have watched this development have come to the conclusion that the Party has been too careless in admitting people to membership who know *little or nothing of Socialist principles*. The well-informed younger comrades agree with this point of view. The Party has also been too tolerant and has not exercised that discipline that is necessary to build a growing working-class party."

Here, then, is the kernel and cause of this and past splits in all such organisations. The scientific Socialist and his party have not paid mere lip service to this view but have seen to it that all who apply for membership in their ranks shall understand and accept at least the Declaration of Principles of Socialism. As is so well stated in the Socialist Party of Great Britain's little pamphlet, "Socialism and Religion":—

"Hence the test of admission to the Socialist Party must be neither more nor less than acceptance of the essential working principles and policy of Socialism as a class movement. To demand more is to degenerate into a sect; to require less is to invite anarchy and embark on the slippery incline of labourism and compromise. These essentials of Socialist principles and policy are outlined in the Declaration of Principles of the Socialist Party (of Great Britain). They can be easily understood by the average worker, and they comprise the irreducible minima of the principles and policy of Socialism; narrow enough to exclude all who are not Socialists, yet broad enough to embrace everyone who is. They form, in consequence, a reasonable and sufficient test . . ."

Because the Socialist Party of America, like its kindred parties the whole world over, ignored the above essentials for membership, its history is full of crises when ignorance and confusion have led—as is inevitable—to schism.

It is most doubtful if they have even learned from their recent experiences. For the correspondent whom we have quoted ends his article with the following:—

"The betrayal of the Party by Sinclair may prove a terrific blow. The Socialist Party vote may be such

that it will lose its official standing. In that case the enormous number of signatures required to get on the ballot will make it almost impossible for the Party to nominate candidates. The peril the Party faces as a result of Sinclair's action is recognised by every real Socialist, and the utmost will be done to avert it."

Here is the usual plea of the vote-catcher for still more vote-catching when he sees that the votes are turning elsewhere.

Those who place an intelligent membership before a large but politically inexperienced one see in this further proof that the Socialist Party of America is not a *Socialist* party. For the workers who support it the future can hold nothing but disappointment, and often despair.

To those workers in the United States who seek the only solution to their problems, Socialism, we of the Workers' Socialist Party open our ranks. We have the one thing worth having, an organisation devoted to the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism.

S. FELPERIN.

## "The Plebs. Atlas"

(Sixty Maps for Worker-Students. Drawn by J. F. Horrabin. N.C.L.C. Publishing Society, Ltd., 15, South Hill Park Gardens, London, N.W.3.)

The N.C.L.C. has published a revised edition of "The Plebs. Atlas," containing sixty maps.

The series of maps are set out in a manner which simplifies an understanding of the events they describe. Each map has an explanatory footnote. The author has followed the method of leaving out all matter not considered essential to the lesson he wants to drive home. For example, in the map of Europe each country is shaded to illustrate its dominance by French, British, or American capitalism; other physical and geographical features which usually characterise maps being left out. There are maps showing the post-war changes in the boundaries of Europe; maps explaining the "Polish" Corridor, the "Balkans Problem," the "Far Eastern Question," etc. A study of these will leave the student in no doubt of the reasons for the last war and will show him the conflicts of capitalist interest which may lead to another. One map shows the zones of influence of the chief capitalist powers; another is illustrated to show the chief industrial centres; others the ramifications of British capitalist interests throughout the world.

Altogether, the Atlas is a useful work: useful when studying history, and handy for reference in connection with current political events and press reports. The price of the Atlas is 1s., well within the reach of most students.

DON.

## HOW TO GET TO HEAD OFFICE.

Great Dover Street is a turning out of Borough High Street, near Borough (Underground) Station. The station is on the line from Morden to Hampstead and Highgate, and lies between the Bank Station and Elephant and Castle.

## NOTICES OF MEETINGS & LECTURES

All meetings are open to non-members, admission free. Questions and discussion are welcomed.

**HEAD OFFICE.** Meetings will be held at Head Office on Sunday evenings at 7.30 p.m. April 1st, no meeting; April 8th, "William Morris," S. Stewart; April 15th, "Revolutions, Past and Future," W. Walters; April 22nd, "What should we do about Fascism?" E. Hardy; April 29th, "Will Britain follow the Moscow Trail?" S. Cash.

**AN ECONOMICS CLASS**, conducted by D. Goldberg, will be held at Head Office each Wednesday evening at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.** Meetings will be held at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street (corner of Guilford Street), W.C.1, Friday evenings at 8.30 p.m. as follows:— April 6th, "Violence and Some Continental Movements," Com. Gilmac; April 13th, "Facts Behind 'Women's Freedom,'" Com. Stewart; April 20th, "A Glance at Sociology," Com. Bellingham; April 27th, "German Struggles and their Lessons," Com. Kohn.

**AN ECONOMICS CLASS**, conducted by A. Kohn, will be held at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, each Wednesday evening at 8 p.m.

**LEYTON.** Meetings will be held at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, at 8 p.m. Sundays. April 1st, "A Socialist's view of Reform," Sandy; April 8th, "Money," Com. Cameron; April 15th, "A Glance at Sociology," Com. Bellingham; April 22nd, "The Life of William Morris," Com. Stewart; April 29th, "Science and Superstition," Com. Evans.

**HACKNEY.** Meetings will be held at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Valette Street, E.9, at 8.30 p.m. April 3rd, "Marxism and Darwinism," H. Waite; April 10th, "Labour Theory of Value," W. Howard; April 17th, "Why we oppose all other Political Parties," "Berry"; April 24th, "The Basic Principles of Marxism," B. Franklin.

**BATTERSEA.** Meetings will be held in the Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, at 8.30 p.m. Thursday, April 12th, "Marxism and Darwinism," E. Lake; Thursday, April 26th, "Science and Superstition," F. Evans.

**A SOCIAL AND DANCE** will be held at Pettit's Farm, Heathway, Dagenham, on Saturday, April 28th, at 8 p.m. Tickets 1s. from E. Burden, 15, Meadow Road, Dagenham, or from Social Committee at Head Office.

**A SOCIAL AND DANCE** will be held at Co-operative Hall, 380, Lea Bridge Road, Leyton, on Saturday, April 21st, at 7 p.m.

## BETHNAL GREEN

### ∴ A LECTURE ∴

will be given at

Bethnal Green Library

on FRIDAY, 13th APRIL, at 7.30 p.m.

"Is Force the Road to Socialism"

A. KOHN

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Workers' Socialist Party (U.S.A.)

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Lecture every Sunday.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

APRIL,



1934

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

## TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Twelve Months, post free .. .. .	2s. 6d.
Six Months, post free .. .. .	1s. 8d.

## A Few Words on Fascism

The cause of the triumph of the groups that have gone under the name of "Socialist" in the years immediately following the war, and the reason they failed to hold the support of the people afterwards, has not yet been properly appreciated by those who aspire to lead the labour movement. Labour leaders of one kind or another attribute their declining influence to what they look upon as a peculiar, powerful and savage bogeyman, "Fascism," and do not ask themselves what Fascism really is and why it claims adherents so rapidly even among working men. The savagery attributed to the various Fascist movements is by no means new, it has been a common characteristic of the social struggle for ages and is not a particular and pernicious post-war growth.

Capitalism was born and flourished on brutality, both at home and abroad. As far as England is concerned, what a record of brutality is contained in the history of the treatment of its factory and agricultural slaves during the last century, of the treatment of the Irish peasant, the African and the Hindu. What recent proceedings have surpassed in brutality the wiping out of the Communards in France sixty-three years ago?

Apart from other considerations the point to be kept in mind is that all privileged classes, from the beginning of their existence in the distant past, fight savagely against all attempts that they believe will encroach upon their privileged position and, where the means are available, they will continue to do so. In modern times the

privileged groups are neither capable enough nor numerous enough to do the work of suppression themselves and so they beguile sections of the oppressed into the belief that the interests of all are identical with the continuance of privilege and they endeavour to weaken the movement for change by setting other sections at loggerheads.

Such being the position the only thing that will combat capitalist movements is clearness of understanding—the spread of knowledge among the workers. Temporary expedients that give a movement size without solidity only raise false hopes and leave the way open for the inevitable collapse. The desertion by workers from the labour parties of England, Italy and Germany was, to a great extent, due to the compromising policies of those parties. On the other hand, had those parties been soundly based, had compromise been excluded, the parties in question would have been smaller, but solid; they would have raised no false hopes nor brought to many the despair they have done.

While parties claiming to be Socialist ally themselves with capitalist groups to gain temporary ends, working men will not draw a line of fundamental distinction between any of the groups that solicit their support. While their suffrages are asked for in support of reforms that do not make any fundamental difference in their social position, the workers naturally tend to support the group that makes the most enticing promises, whatever be the label—in fact, the newer the label the better. Those who do not fulfil their promises are temporarily deserted. The capitalists know this quite well, hence their misuse of the term "Socialist" so much lately.

That is all there is to it at the bottom, and Fascism is no more permanent than the other reform movements that have been used to stave off the inevitable abolition of capitalism.

## William Morris 1834-1896

*"A life in which every human being should find unrestricted scope for his best powers and faculties."*

When Morris proclaimed this as his hope and ambition for the future he was treated as a silly dreamer; the mere idea was dismissed as puerile fantasy. But there was nothing dream-like about Morris's sturdy propagandist methods of fighting to achieve this, his strongest desire, and nothing fanciful about his acceptance of the hard fact that its achievement was bound to be a long and often disillusioning process. However, for a persistent stresser of the class issue, as Morris was, misrepresentation is inevitable. What is our view? We know, as he did, that such an extension and encouragement of indi-

viduality throughout society is historically possible; we hold, with him, that its attainment is well worth the struggle; he constantly maintained, as we do, that the oppressively different conditions prevalent to-day are the result solely and only of the division of society into classes, exploiting and exploited, and that the one possible means of changing those conditions is to do away with class society.

Who, then, was this William Morris? Contentiously referred to in his day as the "poet upholsterer," or the "craftsman Socialist," he presents to our study one of the most admirable personalities and complex intellects of the nineteenth century. Orthodoxy knows him best as artist and craftsman, reviver of dead or dying arts such as tapestry, weaving, dyeing, and the staining of glass, a maker of dignified furniture, rich textiles and fine books. But, alas for orthodoxy, here was an artist who would not conform to artistic tradition and spurn the affairs of this world. He knew, and cried it from the rooftops, that art is a social phenomenon, and that for an artist to attempt to divorce himself or his works from society is mere childishness. To Morris art was inseparable from the everyday life of every member of society, or else it was poisoned at the roots; and the underlying cause of the sordid "eyeless vulgarity" of current everyday life was, he saw and insisted, simply the private ownership of the means of life. His art and his Socialism are inseparable. (It must, of course, be understood that, although in many respects his "Socialism" was a good deal nearer

to our position than that of most of his contemporaries, he naturally had by no means a complete grasp of the Socialist case as we understand it. In particular, he was no student of economics, and

admittedly found the subject bewildering apart from the broad essentials.)

Born in 1834, two years after the Reform Bill, he grew up in the period of definite capitalist ascendancy and consequent smugness. His family was well-to-do; he had, however, the good fortune to run wild considerably and thus both gathered reserves of vitality and escaped much of the conventional training and discipline. A great deal of his childhood was spent roaming Epping Forest (wilder then than now) where he acquired a deep love of open air and stored up rich memories of the shapes, colours and movements of wild plants, which, years later, were incorporated in his designs and decorations. Early in life, also, he showed a fondness for studying architecture, particularly the simple, massive, spacious Gothic.

He was sent to Oxford to take Holy Orders, but religion seems to have slipped almost unperceived from his life after his early days at college. He found there a group of unconventional friends, and, before long, had decided on architecture as a career. His Oxford friends, the chief of whom was Burne-Jones, were all connected with the Pre-Raphaelite move-

ment in painting, and in revolt against the ugliness of contemporary life. The emotional reaction against drabness and dirt was expressed by means of glowing colours applied to subject-matter

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



deliberately archaic, as far removed as possible from hated industrialism. Morris, on leaving Oxford, worked in London as an architect, living with his friend, Burne-Jones, in close association with Rossetti, the leader of the Pre-Raphaelite school. Presently he gave up architecture and began learning to be a painter, writing poetry meanwhile; but his real career started when, after his marriage in 1859, he attempted to furnish a house, but failed to find any goods on the market fine enough either in design, material or workmanship to suit his taste. Characteristically undaunted, he decided to design personally, with the enthusiastic help of a group of friends, not merely the furniture and decorations, but the house itself. So the Red House at Upton was built and furnished. In course of its building the firm of Morris & Co. was founded. This firm's history is one of magnificent technical achievement in every branch of decorative art, the details of which are not, however, relevant to our purpose here. Suffice it to say that Morris always resented the fact that the competitive and exploiting social system made it impossible for his beautiful products to reach the mass of the population, although it was not until the firm had been in existence for some fifteen years that he began to realise that, with the Socialist movement, lay the explanation of his difficulties and the solution of his problems.

His first appearance on public platforms was in connection with the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings, which he helped to found, and which he facetiously nicknamed the Anti-Scrape. A little later he joined the Eastern Question Association, then the National Liberal League, and, finally, in 1883, the Democratic Federation. There followed a period of strenuous political activity, lecturing, writing and street-corner propaganda. The D.F. became the S.D.F. and produced a weekly paper, *Justice*, but it was not long before Morris and Hyndman found themselves unable to agree. Continual dissension as to tactics, principles and authority led to the secession of Morris, at the end of 1884, and the formation of the Socialist League. This body held that the time was not ripe for Parliamentary action, and that the business of the moment, and, indeed, of some time to come, was simply to *make Socialists*, however slow and unspectacular that task might prove. When a sufficient number of Socialists had been made, they said it would be time enough to consider taking political action. In 1886 and 1887 a number of "Free Speech" demonstrations, and, in particular, the events of Bloody Sunday, when an unemployed demonstration was broken up by force of arms, helped to make the Socialist League's name known for its propagandist activities on these occasions, and Morris became a prominent political figure. But opportunism was creeping in; Morris found his policy opposed, he

was considered too slow; Anarchist tendencies also began to show themselves. In 1889 he was deposed from the editorship of the Party journal, the *Commonweal*, and, in the following year, he withdrew from the League, his local branch forming itself into the independent Hammersmith Socialist Society. The League rapidly degenerated into loud-mouthed Anarchism, while the Hammersmith Socialist Society never achieved much more than a local influence except in so far as the lectures delivered there by Morris were subsequently published and had a fair sale.

It must be remembered that, throughout his life, even at the height of his political activities, he continued to make beautiful objects of every kind, to lecture frequently on art, and to write romances, poems and translations from Greek, Latin and Icelandic. All his work is outstanding for its consistent high quality; in nothing is he less than good. He was a man of superb energy, of unconquerable vitality, beset by an ever-present conception of things as they might be, as they some day *would* be, and yet always able to take a youthful delight in the homely pleasures of cooking, camping or playing hide and seek. "An incorrigible dreamer, if you like, but master of his dreams; not drifting hither and thither on the tide of his emotions, but navigating his imagination with a port in view; no visionary enveloped in an atmosphere of vague idealism, but a sane level-headed man if ever there was one."

His theories on art have been much discussed of late. His—rather Ruskin's—definition of art as *man's expression of joy in his labour* has been so bandied about and manhandled that it is not easy to strip off all recent associations and discover what Morris was really trying to convey. Art, he declared, cannot be produced by someone who is unhappy in the work, whereas people whose general everyday occupation gives them joy will consciously, or unconsciously, find means of embodying that joy in the products of their labour and attempting to convey it to others. It does not follow, and Morris certainly did not mean, that everything that anyone has found pleasure in making *must* be a work of art. He applied the definition in a general social sense rather than to each particular product. He always emphasised the social foundations of art, and, by means of this definition, he wished to make it clear that capitalism, by its ruthless exploitation of the mass of mankind, by forcing almost all men to toil at uncongenial occupations, is destroying all possibility of genuine widespread artistic creation. It must be repeated that, to Morris, art, if confined to a small leisured class, did not deserve the name. He was very much influenced by the art theories of Ruskin, particularly by his conception of the intimate relationship between beauty and utility. Ruskin had declared, in special reference to unnecessary ornamentation in architecture, that a

thing that is not useful cannot be beautiful. This is also true in a sense which, perhaps, neither Ruskin nor Morris intended, that is, that beauty—for example, rich and varied colours, rhythmic movements, harmonious sounds, graceful lines, intertwining patterns—is *physically useful* to us in that it exercises and develops our five senses, our "best faculties." It gives us "life, and that more abundantly." But, apart from that, Morris very astutely perceived that this same distinction between beauty and utility has as its basis the class factor; it can only arise in class-divided society. Abolish classes and establish production for use instead of profit, and you destroy for ever this arbitrary distinction between use and beauty.

To assess Morris's Socialism, taken as a whole, is a confusing task. At first sight his avoidance of any but the most generalised economic problems, and his exuberant claim that the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were something closely approaching a Golden Age, make him appear no more than a muddle-headed old Utopian with his heart in the right place and his head in the clouds. But, go a little deeper and you find that, on many points, he took up a position similar to that of the S.P.G.B. He never ceased to maintain that the fundamental cause of all present social problems was class-divided society, production for profit and not for use. He insisted that the only truly practical task for many years to come must be simply, to use his famous slogan, "Education towards Revolution." He disliked seeing untaught masses rushed hither and thither by hotheads and careerists: "Of course," he said, "as long as people are ignorant, compromise plus sentiment always looks better to them than the real article." He early learned, from experience of the slow progress of the one important work of making Socialists, that "Socialism in our time" was a vain hope. Nevertheless, though he gave the social reformers credit for the best of intentions, he steadfastly repeated that no amount of reform could give us Socialism. Neither did he advocate that strange hybrid, "State Socialism"; by Socialism he meant common ownership of the means of life, production not for profit, but for use, and he was not to be put off by any fake or substitute.

To sum up, we may say that William Morris was, indeed, a man of contradictions. He gloried in the past, but dreamed of the future; too energetic to be thoroughly reflective, he was yet too reflective not to see the limitations inflicted on his energies by capitalism; an idealistic view of history and a bourgeois life of honest industry and artistic endeavour led him to Marxist Socialism and soap-box propaganda; he detested capitalism's "sordid, aimless, ugly confusion," yet he was fascinated by such things as railway organisation; his personality was assertive, emphatic, virile; none the less, the main bulk of his literary work

("The Earthly Paradise," "The Life and Death of Jason," and the many prose romances), though its quality is always good and his writing is outstanding for its melodious clarity in a rather pretentious period, is yet inclined to be discursive, lacking in concision, in that terse economy of phrase that gives lasting virility to style. His books always paint a colourful and pleasing picture; his craftsmanship maintains a fine level; yet from a man of his extreme vigour and bluntness this general impression of sunny meadows, serene rivers and calm-browed heroes comes, somehow, incongruously. This is not to dismiss his work as anæmic; and, in short poems here and there, in many descriptive passages in his longer works, his manner is as forthright as anyone's. The main flavour of his literary work, however, is pleasantly satisfying rather than stimulating, graceful rather than incisive. Similarly, with much of his decorative work, the detail of his designs has a grand robustness, but the total effect is over complicated and inclined to monotony, though this, of course, is more apparent to modern taste than it would be in his own day. But all these contradictions fail to detract at all from his vivid, simple exuberance; they serve, in fact, to show up the directness and simplicity of his personal relationships as yet another contradiction, for such characteristics seem strange indeed in one who embodied so many conflicting tendencies. The man himself was an unresolved contradiction, personifying the contradictory forces ever present in capitalist society, but only in the 1850-1890 period becoming crystallised and apparent to all careful observers. It has been said that he was born as the tide of bourgeois ascendancy was setting in, but capitalism bears within itself the seeds of its own destruction, and it is in the time of capitalist expansion and complacency that those seeds begin to take firm root, ready, in course of time, to produce class-conscious Socialists and ultimately a Socialist working-class. Just at that epoch of industrial consolidation and political criticism came Morris, in truth, "a wanderer between two worlds." His life, inasmuch as it condenses within itself innumerable streams of nineteenth century thought and feeling, is an illuminating study. Many of his theories seem strangely remote from us, though it is not yet forty years since his death, but it may be that capitalism has so blunted our senses that we can no longer appreciate his meaning. Most of his Socialist propaganda is clear enough, however, and there is nothing dreamlike or effeminate about this:—

"Intelligence enough to conceive, courage enough to will, power enough to compel. If our ideas of a new society are anything more than a dream, these three qualities must animate the due effective majority of the working people: and then I say the thing will be done."

STEWART.



## Democratic Control

*An Open Letter to the Rank and File of "Labour," "Communist" and "Independent" organisations. 'Comrades of the Working Class,*

I am writing especially with a view to reaching the young and enthusiastic member of such organisations, who, gulled by windy and insincere professions of trust in the "rank and file," is only too often assisting in a tragic game of "over-backs," perpetually called upon to "tuck in the tuppenny" for the vaulting ambition of "leaders," who come well on their feet on the other side.

The *New Leader*, the *Labour Monthly* and the *Daily Worker*, when not keeping up their spirits with chanting the "United Front," supply choice examples from the said "Front" of treachery, incompetence and "careerism."

The *Daily Herald*, run on the most approved capitalist lines, descending to all the usual sordid devices for maintaining circulation, enthusiastically Christian with "Good old George," mildly agnostic with Harold Laski, drinking a loyal toast (fervently adding, "God bless him") with Cripps, forms a convenient clearing house for cheques drawn on working-class ignorance.

In the conspiracy of silence about the Socialist Party of Great Britain, it is difficult to get the "rank and file" to realise the yawning gulf that separates this party from all other political organisations. I ask the younger workers ("Old Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone"—the succeeding verse is politically apposite, Hosea 4, 17) to acquaint themselves with first-hand knowledge of the constitution of the S.P.G.B. Attend all meetings—all of them. Surprising as the fact may be, there are absolutely no private "sessions" of the S.P.G.B. Our "Object," specifically stating DEMOCRATIC CONTROL of the means of life, is reflected in the constitution of the Party. We have emerged from the stage where the superior person, centre of an idolising following, dictates "policy" and creates the "Platform" atmosphere so dear to the Trade Union type of mind.

Get this: Officers and Executive are instruments of the party, strictly accountable to the rank and file (through the branches) for all action taken. Delegates to conferences (come to our Annual Conference on Good Friday, if this reaches you in time; seeing's believing) are instructed by their branches as to action and voting on specific questions. In short, the S.P.G.B. has for good and all abandoned "leadership," not only in word, but in deed. There is, therefore, no need in the S.P.G.B. to keep an eye on possible "careerists"—"picturesque personalities" (to quote a young I.L.P. friend of mine), or otherwise. The constitution of the party simply rules them out, as the eggs of a fish would be barred from complete fishdom deposited on dry land.

Consider for a moment this item of news (*News-Chronicle*, January 19th, 1934):—

"Mr. J. Maxton and Mr. McGovern... had a 90 minutes talk with Mr. De Valera. There was a pledge of secrecy upon the subjects discussed."

What have these two members to conceal from their Party? After all, things are apt to be disclosed. Mr. Maxton, after the Right Honourable James Ramsay MacDonald had followed to its logical conclusion what stood for his political "convictions," was compelled to disclose the fact that he had been deliberately supporting someone he knew was "never a Socialist." That Mr. Maxton "was impressed by De Valera's sincerity and ability" is of no more importance to the working class than Mr. McGovern's considered opinion that His Majesty has a "good 'eart"—which opinion was deliberately omitted in the *New Leader*, although immediately preceding remarks (concerning a silly exhibition at the opening of Parliament) were recorded.

My young friends may find the following extract interesting, if not illuminating: "When the Little Peddlington Branch of the S.D.P. or the Flat-ditch Branch of the I.L.P. sends me a pompous notice, written in ungrammatical English on dirty paper, that the comrades in the said Branch have publicly disassociated themselves from me, I retire into my armchair and smile. These poor, dear little comrades, never did have a sense of humour."

There speaks the typical "leader." Don't they just despise you? But you ask for it... The author of the foregoing quotation? Oh, yes—Robert Blatchford, *Clarion* (January 14th, 1910). Have I seen the *New Clarion*? "New presbyter is but old priest writ large."

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD is democratically owned and controlled by the Party. Battling through thirty years for SOCIALISM, and Socialism all the time, it has never ceased to be the organ of the PARTY, never deviated from the position determined by the sheet-anchor of the Party, our Declaration of Principles.

With Lewis Morgan (*Ancient Society*, page 344) we believe that "the human race is gradually learning the simple lesson that the people as a whole is wiser for the public good than any privileged class of men, however refined and cultivated."

Not that one would regard Blatchford's vulgar outburst as "refined" or "cultivated."

Yours for Socialism,

A. REGINALD.

### Sheffield.

Readers are invited to a Lecture and discussion at the Friends' School (Room 10), Hartshead, on Monday, April 9th, at 7.30 p.m.

Subject—"The Workers' Struggle for Emancipation." Speaker—E. Boden. Admission free.

## "Hyde Park Orator"

In his "Hyde Park Orator" (Jarrolds, 287 pages, 10s. 6d.), Mr. Bonar Thompson has written a somewhat irritating but entertaining book. He tells us about his early life in Northern Ireland, his introduction to working-class life in English industrial areas, his contacts with trade unions and labour organisations, and his strenuous and not always very successful efforts to earn his living as cheap-jack in the market-place, and as platform speaker and entertainer.

He has done and seen many things, and has learned how to describe them vividly enough—this, in spite of Sean O'Casey's criticism in the Preface—and many of the things he says are worth saying. He cuts through a great deal of humbug and pretentiousness, and shows up many of the weaknesses of working-class organisations. While his criticisms of men and movements are often one-sided and malicious (he has a savage paragraph on the S.P.G.B.), it does no organisation any harm to hear what it looks like to a keen, even if prejudiced, onlooker.

Nevertheless, the whole book is made needlessly irritating by Mr. Thompson's efforts to pose as the hard-bitten, work-shy cynic, who was never himself a believer in the principles to which he professed adherence. In adopting this pose he has been preceded by Mr. Walton Newbold, and in neither case is the claim true. Mr. Thompson's pose ought to deceive nobody. He himself remarks on a sensitiveness to ridicule which he says he finds highly developed in the working-class movement. It is no doubt partly this sensitiveness in him which makes him so anxious to disclaim ever having shared the illusions of those around him. At an early age he acquired a dislike for the kind of work and working conditions which alone were open to him. This was only natural, but his pretence that he has spent a lifetime dodging work is ludicrous. In spite of his claim he has had to work very hard indeed to maintain a precarious existence. Workers cannot escape the evils of working-class life by adopting poses or practising self-deception.

Needless to say, Mr. Thompson often forgets his pose. He boasts of having lived by deception of the workers, but gets very indignant regarding Labour Leaders who, according to his account, are working a "racket" no worse than his. He sneers at the workers for being so credulous and sheep-like, but turns and calls them ungrateful when they do not give him generous collections. After all, according to Mr. Thompson's philosophy, why should the workers pay him for his strenuous orations if they can hear them for nothing? If for reasons of inexperience, necessity, or sentiment, Mr. Thompson offers the wrong wares for sale, or offers them in the wrong place, he should be the

last to complain. And although he chides the workers for their credulousness, he is furiously angry with the S.P.G.B., which at least never shared his and the Labour Party's illusions about leadership, the value of emotional appeals, the impending collapse of capitalism, etc.

It is a pity that a man with Mr. Thompson's experience, who has unlearned many false lessons, should have allowed bitterness to stand in the way of recognising that the failure of so many reformist activities does not in the least touch the solid basis on which the case for Socialism really rests.

H.

## Welcome to a New Socialist Journal

A few months ago we were able to welcome the first number of the *Western Socialist*, organ of the Socialist Party of Canada. Our New Zealand comrades followed suit in January with the first number of the *Socialist Review*. The propaganda of Socialism in Canada and New Zealand is thus strengthened by the circulation of journals putting the same point of view as THE SOCIALIST STANDARD, but written with knowledge of local conditions. We congratulate our comrades on the excellent journals they are producing in circumstances of great difficulty. Readers of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD in those countries are urged to give all the assistance they can, whether in the form of donations to cover the loss inseparable from the publication of a new Socialist paper, or in the form of efforts to gain more readers.

In New Zealand the usual financial difficulties are rendered still more acute by the Government's ban on public meetings.

The addresses of the Canadian *Western Socialist* and the New Zealand *Socialist Review* are given elsewhere in this issue of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD.

We are now looking forward to the time when our comrades in U.S.A. and Australia can also publish their own journals.

## "SOCIALISM"

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## The Materialist Conception of History

A Further Letter on the Subject

By FREDERICK ENGELS.

Translated for the "Proletarian" by Prof. J. I. Cheski, of the University of Michigan.

A young student addressed to Engels the following questions:

1. How is it that, after the consanguineous family ceased to exist, marriage between brothers and sisters was still permitted by the Greeks, as Cornelius Nepos attests?

2. How was the fundamental principle of historical materialism understood by Marx and Engels themselves; are the production and reproduction of actual life alone the determining factors, or are they only the basis of all the other conditions acting by themselves?

Frederick Engels replied:

London, Sept. 21, 1890.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 3rd inst. was forwarded to me at Folkestone; but not having the book I needed I could not reply. Having returned on the 12th of the same month, I found such an amount of pressing work that only to-day am I able to write a few lines. Please excuse my delay.

To your first question:—First of all you can see on p. 19 of my "Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State," the Punalua family is represented as developing so slowly that even in this century in the royal family there have been marriages between brothers and sisters. In antiquity we find examples of marriages between brothers and sisters, for instance, the Ptolemies. We must make a distinction between brothers and sisters on the mothers' side and brothers and sisters on the fathers' side. The Greek Adelphos (brother) and Adelphon (sister) are both derived from Delphos (mother), indicating thus the origin of brother and sister on the mother's side. And from the period of the Matriarchate there has been preserved for a long time the feeling that the children of one mother but of different fathers are more closely related than the children of one father but by different mothers. The Punalua form of the family excludes only marriages among the first, not among the second, since the latter, while the Matriarchate lasted, were not even considered relatives. Cases of matrimony between brothers and sisters in Ancient Greece are limited to those in which the contracting parties are descended from different mothers, or to those of whom the parental relationship was unknown, and hence the marriage was not forbidden. This, therefore, is not absolutely in contrast with the Punalua custom. You have noticed, then, that between the Punalua period and Greek monogamy there is a jump from the Matriarchate to the Patriarchate, which changes things considerably.

According to the "Greek Antiquities" of Wachsmuth, one finds in the heroic period of Greece "no trace of scruples due to a too close relationship of the contracting parties independently of the relationship between the parents and children." (P. 156.) "Marriage with a carnal sister was not at all scandalous in Crete." (Ibid., p. 170.) This last affirmation is based on Strabone (X) but at the present moment I cannot find this passage because of faulty division of chapters. Under the expression "carnal sister" I understand, until proof to the contrary is furnished, a sister on the part of the father.

To the second question:—

I have interpreted your first main phrase in the following way: According to the Materialist Conception of History, the factor which is in the last instance decisive in history is the production and reproduction of actual life. More than this neither Marx nor myself ever claimed. If now someone has distorted the meaning in such a way that the economic factor is the only decisive one, this man has changed the above proposition into an abstract, absurd phrase which says nothing. The economic situation is the base, but the different parts of the structure—the political forms of the class struggle and its results, the constitutions established by the victorious class after the battle is won, forms of law and even the reflections of all these real struggles in the brains of the participants, political theories, juridical, philosophical, religious opinions, and their further development into dogmatic systems—all this exercises also its influence on the development of the historical struggles and in cases determines their form. It is under the mutual influence of all these factors that, rejecting the infinitesimal number of accidental occurrences (that is, things and happenings whose intimate sense is so far removed and of so little probability that we can consider them non-existent, and can ignore them), that the economical movement is ultimately carried out. Otherwise the application of the theory to any period of history would be easier than the solution of any simple equation. We ourselves make our history, but, primarily, under pre-suppositions and conditions which are very well determined. But even the political tradition, nay, even the tradition that man creates in his head, plays an important part even if not the decisive one. The Prussian State has itself been born and developed because of certain historical reasons, and, in the last instance, economic reasons. But it is very difficult to determine without pedantry that, among the many small States of northern Germany, precisely Brandenburg has been destined by economic necessity and not also by other factors (above all its complications with Poland after the Prussian conquest and hence, also, with international politics—which, besides has also been decisive in the formation of the power of the Austrian ruling

family), to become that great power in which are personified the economic, linguistic, and—after the Reformation—also the religious difference between the North and South. It would be mighty difficult for one who does not want to make himself ridiculous to explain from the economic point of view the existence of each small German State of the past and present, or even the phonetic differentiation of High German which extended the geographic division formed already by the Sudetti mountains as far as the Faunus.

In the second place history forms itself in such a way that the ultimate result springs always from the conflicts of many individual wills, each of which in its turn is produced by a quantity of special conditions of life; there are thus innumerable forces which cross each other, an infinite group of parallelograms of forces, from which is derived one resultant—the historical event—which in its turn again can be considered as the product of an active power, as a whole unconsciously and involuntarily, because that which each individual wishes is prevented by every other, and that which results from it is a thing which no one has wished. In this way history runs its course like a natural process, and has substantially the same laws of motion. But, because of the fact that the individual wills—each of which wishes that to which it is impelled by its own physical constitution or exterior circumstances, i.e., in the last analysis, all economic circumstances (either its own personal circumstances or the general conditions of society)—do not reach that which they seek but are fused in one general media in a common resultant, by this fact one cannot conclude that they are equal to zero. On the contrary, each contributes to produce the resultant, and is contained in it.

I would further ask you to study the theory from its original sources and not from second-hand works; it is really much easier. One can say that Marx has written nothing in which some part of the theory is not found. An excellent example of its application in a specific way is the "Eighteenth Brumaire of L. Bonaparte." Also in "Capital" (III) are many illustrations. And also permit me to recommend to you my writings, Herr E. Duehring's "Umwälzung der Wissenschaft," and "Feuerbach und der Ausgang der Klassischen deutschen Philosophie," in which I have given the most ample illustrations of Historical Materialism which to my knowledge exists. That the young people give to the economic factor more importance than belongs to it is in part the fault of Marx and myself. Facing our adversaries we had to lay especial stress on the essential principle denied by them, and, besides, we had not always the time, place, or occasion to assign to the other factors which participate in producing the reciprocal effect, the part which belongs to them. But scarcely

has one come to the representation of a particular historical period, that is, to a practical application of the theory, when things changed their aspect, and such an error was no longer permissible. It happens too often that one believes he has perfectly understood a new theory, and is able to manage it without any aid, when he has scarcely learned the first principles, and not even those correctly. This reproof I cannot spare to some of our new Marxists; and in truth it has been written by the wearer of the marvellous robe himself. (That is, by Marx.—Editor.)

To the first question:—Yesterday (I am writing these words on the 22nd of Sept.) I also found in Schomann, "Greek Antiquities," Berlin, 1855, Vol. I, p. 52, the following words, which confirm definitely the explanation given by me. "It is noteworthy that in later Greece marriages between brothers and sisters of different mothers were not considered incest."

I hope you will not be dismayed by the terrible parentheses which for the sake of brevity overflow from my pen. And I subscribe myself.

Your devoted,

F. ENGELS.

## Waiting for Something to Turn Up

A correspondent (Mr. G. Turner, Ponders End) writes asking what the S.P.G.B. is going to do about his problem—unemployment. He says that he is in a hurry and that the S.P.G.B. has been in existence now for thirty years and has done nothing but talk nonsense.

It is of course quite evident that Mr. Turner has not grasped what is the case the S.P.G.B. has been putting forward for thirty years. If we had said thirty years ago, to Mr. Turner and others like him: "If you leave things to us we will solve your problem for you. We will get you work or unemployment pay at once, or in the near future, and in the more distant future we will give you Socialism"—if we had said this or anything like it, Mr. Turner could quite reasonably come to us now and ask: "What about it? Where are the things you promised? What have you done to justify your existence?"

But we never made such a promise, and Mr. Turner and his fellow chasers of will-o'-the-wisps have themselves to blame, not us. What we did promise has been justified up to the last dot and comma. We told the working class in 1904 that what they were suffering from was capitalism, that the only remedy was Socialism, and that the only method was through the control of the machinery of Government and the armed forces by a politically organised majority of Socialists. We said that the reformism, the promises of "something now," the appeals for trust in leaders, and the electoral vote-catching of the Liberal and Labour parties, the I.L.P. and the S.D.F., etc., would solve no problem



and would not advance us towards Socialism by one single day.

Mr. Turner and the great mass of the workers chose to follow another path than that pointed out by us. The result is what we foretold. They have got what their conduct warranted. Now Mr. Turner comes along and asks us what we have done for him. He should ask himself what he has done. Above all, he should stop and think before he allows his desire to get something in a hurry lead him again along the reformist paths which his footsteps took in 1904. If he ignored our warning then, he should consider it now and save himself more wasted years.

### BOOKS FOR SALE

The following books are obtainable from the Literature Secretary, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1. On application advice will be given about books on Socialism. Post free.

Capital. Vols. I, II, & III. Karl Marx. Each vol.	10 6
Eighteenth Brumaire. Karl Marx	2 9
Revolution and Counter Revolution. Karl Marx	2 9
Evolution of Property. Paul Lafargue	2 9
Social and Philosophical Studies. Paul Lafargue	2 9
Socialism, Utopian and Scientific. F. Engels	3 9
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Memoirs of Karl Marx. W. Liebknecht	2 9
Essays on the Materialist Conception of History.	
A. Labriola	5 6
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Other books useful to students can be obtained from Head Office.

### THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.)

Readers in U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

Readers in Canada are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of Canada at 194, Market Avenue, Winnipeg, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND

Readers in New Zealand are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of New Zealand. Secretary, T. J. Philips, 16, Hawea Road, Pt. Chevalier, Auckland, W.3, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the S.P. of Australia at Box 1440 P.O., Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

Lectures every Sunday night at 8 p.m. 122 Bourke Street, City. All welcome. Questions and discussions.

### NEW SOUTH WALES

Readers in N.S. Wales are invited to communicate with the Secretary, 11 Wangee Road, Lakemba, N.S.W., for SOCIALIST STANDARDS and information.

### BRANCH DIRECTORY

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.
- BIRKENHEAD.**—Communications to H. Dawson, 26, Vulcan Street, Birkenhead, Cheshire.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington, Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.
- BLOOMSBURY.**—Secretary, M. Sandy, 269, Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1. Branch meets every Friday at 7.30 p.m. at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road).
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- ECCELES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. LEA, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Lancs.
- EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place.
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- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Tuesday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., E. Chalkley, 21, Bridge Street, E.9.
- HULL.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at York Room, The Metropole. Communications to Sec., at 62, Ampleforth Grove, Willerby Road.
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- WEMBLEY.**—Communications to H. G. Holt, 34, Betham Road, Greenford, Middlesex. Branch meets every Friday at 7.45 p.m. at Cafe-Restaurant over 170, High Road, Wembley.
- WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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London, May, 1934

[Monthly, Twopence

*For the . . .  
moment that  
the capitalist  
class will lose  
its political .  
power, it will  
lose also its  
social and . .  
economic . .  
position.*

AUGUST BEBEL.

## The Situation in Italy IS FASCISM CRACKING?

On March 25th of this year Mussolini's list of candidates for election to the Chamber of Deputies received 10,041,997 votes, while only 15,265 votes were given against. The poll was the largest ever recorded, only  $3\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. of the electorate staying away. This, at least, is what the Italian government announces, but those who know the extent to which election-faking has been carried in some European and South American countries will be sceptical. As one observer has pointed out, if over ten million voters are enthusiastically for the government and only 15,000 against, why does Mussolini require an enormous and costly army of police and troops and government agents to defend himself and his satellites?

Why the continual public trials of alleged plotters and rebels? Why the penal settlements on lonely islands for political offenders? Why, when Mussolini travels to certain industrial towns to receive the delighted plaudits of the admiring multitude, does he mass police, troops, detectives, armoured cars, and bombing planes for his pro-

tection? The answer is that capitalism in Italy has proved to be no different from capitalism anywhere else, and numbers of Italian workers who suffer under it are no more satisfied with its effects than they were before Mussolini rose to power.

How the vote was rigged was explained in a letter to "The Times" (April 5th), written by an Italian voter who, needless to say, did not consider it safe to disclose his identity. First, he explains, the general public were given to understand that abstention from voting would be treated severely, just as severely as voting against. Secondly, the voting was not secret, every vote being easily and immediately identified by the officials present at the polling booth. At some voting stations the authorities did not even issue any "no" voting slips to the voters. Other observers reported that there were gangs of armed Fascists at the polling booths to impress doubters with the wisdom of voting the right way. It was an offence to influence voters to vote "no," and anti-Fascists who tried to distribute leaflets were at once arrested.

In this situation Italian workers who are strongly opposed to Mussolini's government and his list of candidates, decided that the only thing to do was to go to the poll and vote "yes" and thus safeguard their illegal political activities from the inquiry that would be set afoot concerning any man who voted "no" or stayed away.

Nevertheless, the importance of these various modifying factors ought not to be exaggerated. In the absence of specific information there is not sufficient reason to doubt that Mussolini can still count on the support or, at least, on the indifference of a majority of the population. A govern-

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ment does not need to have the active support of a majority in order to be able to carry on the administration of capitalism. During last century, and in recent years, there have been many examples of minority government. The position of such a government is secure enough (assuming the continued allegiance of the armed forces) as long as the population are indifferent or are banded in mutually hostile groups, which hold aloof because they are more opposed to each other than to the government. Dollfuss's government in Austria is in that position.

The distribution of votes to the various Italian parties, prior to their suppression by Mussolini, gives us something on which to form an estimate. The non-Fascist parties were not dissolved until 1926, four years after Mussolini came into control. In 1924 elections were held at which all parties put forward candidates, and the three separate and mutually warring parties into which the Italian Labour group had split (Unitarians, Maximalists and Communists) between them only received one-quarter of the votes cast for the Fascists. Prior to the Fascists coming into power, the Italian Socialist Party (the name under which the Labour group went before its breaking up into these three separate parties) had polled about one-third of the total votes. This then can be taken as their maximum strength at that time, but some of these supporters undoubtedly went over to the Fascists before and after he gained control in 1922. This, together with intimidation, accounts for the decline in the total Labour vote between 1919 and 1924.

In the ten years that have passed since 1924 it is certain that the normal evils of capitalism, poverty, unemployment, insecurity and so on, will have made the pendulum swing back again towards the Labour and Communist groups notwithstanding the fact that they are not allowed to exist as legal political parties. It is possible, therefore, that if all of the non-Fascist sections of the population were added together (including those who are indifferent as well as Liberals and some of the Catholics) they might by now outnumber Mussolini's supporters. On the other hand, it is fairly certain that none of the opposition groups alone is nearly as strong in numbers as the Fascist Party.

One factor which would assist Mussolini to get a large "Yes" vote, even without pressure, would be the form of the vote. Many electors who felt no enthusiasm for the Government or for the 400 candidates as a whole would be induced to vote "Yes" by the fact that the only alternative was to reject the whole list and the Government behind it. Not being able to vote for and against individual candidates, they would be inclined to vote "Yes" to the whole 400 because of the presence in the list of some few who, in

addition to nominally representing working-class interests, appeared to be less objectionable than the majority of candidates.

Taking all these factors into account, when we are told by Italian exiles and by others to whom the wish is father to the thought that Italy is on the verge of revolt, we need to accept their statements with more than caution. It is not questioned that strikes and riots occur from time to time in Italian industrial areas and villages, and that armed force is used to suppress them, but these are normal features of capitalism, and, in isolation, they have no great significance. What we have to ask is whether there are in Italy any indicators pointing to widespread revolt, now or in the near future. When this question is put to Italian anti-Fascists they tell us how the bankruptcies have increased, how trade and railway traffic have declined, how wages have been cut, and how crimes have increased with the increase of unemployment to over a million, and how the Government is faced with a big budget deficit.

However, an examination of these signs brings out one thing only. It is that none of them is peculiar to Italy. Every capitalist country, during the depression, has faced them and dealt with them more or less successfully from the electors' point of view. In many countries the result has been a change of Government, sometimes a mere reshuffling, sometimes a veritable upheaval. Can Mussolini weather the storm? That depends on his skill in adjusting his policy to the discontent among different sections of the population. Hitherto he, like Stalin in Russia, has managed to do so, although it is interesting to observe that Stalin has just had to abandon secret trials and introduce other relaxations of the dictatorship. Mussolini, with his modified electoral system, has so far succeeded in doing what politicians in Great Britain do rather more smoothly and easily with their system of unfettered democratic elections.

That he, in Italy, and Stalin, in Russia, and their advisers, can do this, is due in the last resort to the political inexperience and limited demands of the population. Given an electorate which demands of its rulers nothing more than work or unemployment pay, and various sops in the way of social reforms, those petty demands will accurately measure the value they place on elections to Parliament or to any other elected assembly. An astute politician like Mussolini, aided by the knowledge of political trickery he gained in the Italian Labour movement, and backed up by the resources of the State with which to broadcast his views and suppress those of his opponents, has been able to divide and rule. When discontent becomes acute in any quarter he can give just the same kind of concessions as are

obtainable in the democratic Parliament of England, and thus buy off sufficient of the discontent to be able to suppress or ignore the remainder.

Since pettifogging social reforms are the utmost that the majority of workers demand of capitalism so far, they are relatively indifferent to the workings of the system provided that some of their demands are met. For a while they can even be put off with mere promises of better times in the future, "when the depression is over," or "when the second five-year plan is completed," or "when we have finished planning our Corporative State," according to the custom of the particular country.

If free elections are permitted these non-Socialist workers will vote for the reform programmes of Liberal, Tory, Labour or Communist candidates as their fancy leads them. If free elections are suppressed they will grumble a little, but many of them will be quite content to believe that they will continue to get much the same reforms as before by voting for Mussolini's selected 400 nominees. In short, they accept capitalism administered by Mussolini with little more complaint than capitalism administered by a party of their own choice.

In Italy Mussolini's task was from the outset rendered even easier than it would otherwise have been by the idiocy of the Anarchists and Syndicalists who persuaded many thousands of workers to accept the silly doctrine that control of the State is a myth, thus helping to clear the way for the Fascists to gain what was indispensable to them—control of the machinery of Government. There was truth in the remark made to Trotsky by Serrati, the Italian Labour leader, that "to our shame, Mussolini learned more from the Bolsheviks than we did."

Another important factor was, and still is, the large number of peasants and the relatively small number of industrial workers. This made it difficult even for a reformist Labour Party to secure a majority, and enabled Mussolini to some extent to set the peasants against the town workers.

If there had been in Italy a strong Socialist movement instead of the vague attachment to reformism, the vote would never have been misused by Socialists as it was by Labourites in the years before the Fascists rose to power. They would have strongly opposed the series of stupid seizures of factories and attempted general strikes which gave the Fascists their plea that they were needed "to restore order." They would have valued Parliament, not for the petty reforms obtainable through it, but because through and only through control of the machinery of government will the Socialist majority be in a position to establish Socialism. Socialists would not, like so many of the Italian workers, have been bought

off by Mussolini's mixture of social reforms and political claptrap.

One entertaining aspect of Italian Fascism is the reputation Mussolini has gained for being a man of action, "the man who cleared out the talkers." Now, twelve years after gaining control, he and his deputies are still discussing what kind of "Corporative State" it is going to be when (and if) it ever gets beyond the stage of discussion. All that has been done so far is the passing of the Corporations Law, for Mussolini, that interminable speechmaker, with his Fabian belief in "hastening slowly," has postponed the real Corporative State three stages into the future. First, he says, the Corporations have to be set up (Corporations being bodies representing employers and workers in each great branch of production). Then they must be watched functioning under a continuance of the present political system. Then finally will come the third step of actually allowing the Corporations to supersede the political system. Mussolini is probably quite well aware that the whole thing is a great bluff. Like many of his activities, its function is to make the capitalist rose appear to smell sweeter because it is called by another name.

Mussolini promised a new system, neither Capitalism nor Socialism, but has not modified the capitalist economic system in any important particular, as witness the poverty and unemployment to be found there. He promised to free Italy from dependence on world capitalism, but has been hit, just like other countries, by the depression, and by a huge fall in Italian exports. He—like Stalin—talks of "national self-sufficiency," but—also like Stalin—his Government strains every nerve to encourage production for the export trade and to find new world markets. He attacked the capitalist monetary system, but is now fighting hard to save Italian currency from depreciation and to keep on the gold standard. He promised the abolition of "demagogic" election campaigns of the kind familiar in Great Britain, but has in fact only pushed them off the stage. Behind the scenes, for weeks before polling day, there is a great secret election campaign in progress, the rival interests trying to secure the inclusion of their favoured nominees among the 400 Government candidates who are offered to the electorate to be voted for or against.

Although Mussolini (again like Stalin) has been so adroit in retaining power by cunning manoeuvres, by reshuffling his cabinet, by repeatedly changing some feature or other of the political system, and by frequent changes of policy, neither he nor Stalin, for all their cleverness, have been able either to get rid of capitalism or to make it work any more satisfactorily for the workers than in the capitalist countries where



democratic methods are used. They are just as much the creatures of the forces and interests in their respective countries as ever Lloyd George or Hitler, and should some event occur which turns the shallow favour of the population to another hero, they will disappear from the public eye, leaving little or no permanent mark behind them.

In spite of his gerrymandered election victory Mussolini might well ponder over the fate of Napoleon III, Emperor of the French. In 1848 he was elected President by 5,400,000 votes, more than three times as many as were cast for his two rivals together. In 1851, in order to aid certain capitalist interests, he manoeuvred a change in the Constitution providing, among other things, that the President should be elected for ten years. The population confirmed the change by 7,500,000 votes to 640,000, and a year later he became Emperor by 7,800,000 votes to less than 250,000. After eighteen years he again revised the Constitution and was delighted that his schemes received nearly 6 million votes on a poll of 9 millions. This was on May 8th, 1870, and he and his advisers were confident that his position and popularity were firmly grounded, although, like Mussolini, they took care to "influence" the voting. Yet within four months he had abdicated, and the bulk of those who had voted for him saw him go without regret. French troops had surrendered to Germany and the millions of voters wanted their hero no longer.

Mussolini's power and popularity rest on similar broad but shallow foundations. Sooner or later he will go, but capitalism will not be undermined by that. The task of building up a genuine Socialist movement as the first step towards working class emancipation will still remain to be tackled.

H.

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

"Searchers" (Glasgow). Letter to Mr. T. A. Morgan at address given, returned by Postal Authorities marked "Unknown." Please give present address.—Ed. COMM.

"Indolent Kern." See article "How shall we Attain Socialism," in reply to your letter.

#### This Month's Quotation

The quotation this month is from a speech in which August Bebel attacked the position taken up by Jaures at an International Congress at Amsterdam. It is reproduced in Hillquit's "Socialism in Theory and Practice" (page 138).

#### R A M B L E

To Epsom Downs, Headley & Mickleham  
on SUNDAY, MAY 6th  
Approximate expenses, 2/6 each  
Meet by Platform 1, Waterloo Station, 10 a.m.

### Our Message for May Day and Every Day

Once again May 1st sees the gathering of Labour to march, with banners flying, to the places appointed as centres for speech-making. For over forty years these processions have been an annual Labour event, but the class that lives on Labour still remains solidly entrenched in the seat of power, and, bitter commentary on the periodical display, is kept there with the aid of the votes of the processionists.

It is interesting to recall that at one of these meetings in 1915 Ben Tillet, for long a favourite May-Day orator, addressed the following message to French workers:—

Britain alert, mutually co-operating with France, stands for civilisation, for a spiritual awakening of Europe for the overthrow of Kaiserism, militarism, and the capitalistic vandals whose brutal power is now ravishing Europe, and the world itself."

("Reynolds," May 9th, 1915.)

Nineteen years have passed away, Ben Tillet has gone into a well-deserved oblivion, the "vandals" were overthrown, but armament conferences still give their window dressing performances and newer and more deadly means for murdering are devised. To cap it all Germany, under Hitler, is now staging an official "Labour Day" complete with hammer and sickle, the Communist emblems, alongside the swastika!

Discontent is as strong now as ever it was, but it is still politically ignorant discontent, and while it remains so it will be, as in the past, the sport of flaming orators like Ben Tillet—and Adolf Hitler.

Bands and banners are symbols of emotion and can lead a column equally well to their goal or to destruction. The path to social freedom cannot be cut out by mere emotional outbursts, there are too many entanglements on the way. Those who have enjoyed the emotional uplift of the march and the meetings afterwards relapse into their customary grooves. In the main their revolutionary fervour is just the pastime of a particular day. It will continue to be so until the workers give as serious and thoughtful consideration to their social conditions as they do to the getting of their daily bread. When the mass of the workers adopt this attitude they will lose their admiration for oratorical outbursts and cease to waste their time on fruitless displays.

No great knowledge is needed to understand the workers' social condition. The position is so simple that one is almost astounded to find how much effort is needed to induce workers to examine it seriously. In a few words it may be put as follows:—

The wealth of the world is produced by the workers, but the capitalists, by their ownership of the means of production, own the product of the

workers' labour. In return for their productive labour the workers receive in the form of wages only sufficient, as a rule, to keep them living and producing. The wealth remaining enables the capitalists to enjoy their lives of ease. The capitalists are in control of the political machinery and use it to keep the workers in their condition of subjection. The workers by their votes put the capitalists in possession of this political machinery at election times. The problem for the workers is how to get rid of their subject condition. The solution is to abolish the present private ownership of the means of production and substitute for it common ownership. This can be accomplished by the workers sending delegates to Parliament for the purpose, the delegates to act as their servants to carry out their instructions. The workers would then obtain control of the political machinery and be able to break the power of capital.

The position is just as simple as this and does not need a fanfare of trumpets to demonstrate it. It is a message for every day and not only for specially picked occasions. It speaks the same language in every land and to every race. It has neither a religious nor a nationalist outlook. It points out the unity of interest of the workers of the world and their common antagonism to capitalism.

Finally it was, it is, and it will be our message for every day until the last of our chains have parted and we are entering the new free social conditions that one day will be our heritage.

"GILMAC."

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(The size of the page was altered in September, 1918, and again in September, 1932. Series extending over these dates must therefore be bound in separate volumes.)

### Boston Local Workers' Socialist Party (U.S.A.)

Headquarters open every evening:

629 WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM 214, DORCHESTER.

Socialist Literature for sale: Library available for study.

Marxian Study Class: Every Tuesday, at 8.15 p.m.

Lecture every Sunday.

### Should Socialists Support the Labour Party?

A correspondent writes giving his reasons for believing that Socialists ought to support Labour candidates at local elections. His letter and our reply are printed below. For convenience we have numbered the paragraphs of the letter.

Dear Sir,

1.—With reference to article on L.C.C. elections in SOCIALIST STANDARD, April issue, I wish to state, that whilst I agree with points and facts enumerated, I still consider that the problem concerning the working class is still unsolved, and no guide or advice is given. The fact is we are still under capitalism, and have to act accordingly. The powers that be, will enforce by law, force, or any other means, their desire to carry on "administration."

2.—There is no reason why you should not support "local elections," in the same way as you support "Trade Unions," viz.: supporting same "when they are working to the advantage of the working class."

3. I suggest that a Labour man, with knowledge of our daily struggle, will view applicants for "Social Service" with a far more generous and sympathetic attitude than Tory members, who at times may not even know, or seemingly realise that poverty exists.

4.—If the Tories were not opposed, the public would be told that, "so and so returned unopposed," and so convey the impression that every one in this or that district were perfectly satisfied.

With a repetition of this nonsense, they would become all-powerful, and impose still further "economy" cuts in housing, relief, etc., the result would be more slums, less assistance, less milk for infants, less care for maternity, and finally, the morale and spirit would be broken, without sufficient will power to even care.

5.—Whatever your argument may be, I am firmly convinced that if some among us show the electorate that we do care, can govern, and even have the power to put up constructive argument, that at least will be a step in the right direction: and when the people have been educated and really desire a change, they will know they have experienced workers ready and prepared to establish Socialism.

Yours fraternally,  
A. A.

(1) Our correspondent says that the article "The Labour Party and the London County Council," in the April SOCIALIST STANDARD, did not give guidance or advice. This is not correct. The article stated quite plainly that the solution of the problem brought about by capitalism is through control of the machinery of government, including the armed forces, by a Socialist electorate. This, moreover, is clearly laid down in our Declaration of Principles published in that and every issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Further, it is not correct that because we live under capitalism we have no choice as to what action we shall take. It is true that the capitalist class while in control will take whatever steps they deem necessary for the administration of capitalism, but this does not mean that Socialists either have to or ought to act as willing agents of the capitalists in this work.



Socialists have, and exercise, a choice, by devoting themselves to the task of propagating Socialism among the workers, and of building up the Socialist political organisation which alone can achieve Socialism.

(2) Our correspondent says in this paragraph that "there is no reason why you should not support 'local elections' in the same way as you support Trade Unions."

The use of the words "local elections" introduces confusion and ambiguity into the statement. If what is meant is that we should "contest" local elections by putting up our own candidates, then we fully agree.

The S.P.G.B. has at different times in the past put forward candidates at local elections, and will do so again, and increasingly as the number of Socialists grows.

If, however, what is really meant is not that we should put forward Socialist candidates but support Labour Party candidates, then there are many objections. It is necessary and desirable that workers under capitalism should organise on the economic field in order to resist the encroachments of the employers. That is why the S.P.G.B. supports Trade Union organisation and action on sound lines.

But it is not true, as our correspondent assumes, that giving support to Labour Party candidates is "to the advantage of the working class." This is dealt with later.

(3) This paragraph raises the issue of the more "generous and sympathetic" attitude of the Labour Party councillors as contrasted with that of Liberal or Tory councillors. It is almost entirely irrelevant. Labour councillors on the L.C.C. or other similar body are not there to exercise their generosity or sympathy but to carry out capitalist laws under the strict control of the central Government and its officials. What, therefore, happens is not that the workers feel grateful for the sympathy and generosity of the Labour Party councillors, but that they blame the latter for the callousness of the laws and regulations they are carrying out. If a Labour Council kicks over the traces it is sharply called to order by the central Government, if need be by the threat or reality of imprisonment as happened in Poplar a few years ago to Mr. George Lansbury and others.

Furthermore, the claim that the Labour councillors have a monopoly of knowledge of poverty or the desire to be sympathetic is absurd. Liberals and Tories have just as much right to claim to share in these cheap and useless virtues, and no matter who are the individuals who wish to be sympathetic and generous in spending local government funds, their wish invariably wilts at the prospect of being imprisoned or surcharged for doing so in defiance of the law.

(4) Our correspondent here asks us to accept the assumption that if the S.P.G.B. did not support Labour candidates the Tories would be unopposed and would conclude in consequence that there is no discontent. This is full of fallacious arguments. In the first place the S.P.G.B. has always refused to support the candidates of any other party. Can our correspondent then tell us at what election the Tories were unopposed?

If the statement assumes that at some time the S.P.G.B. will be strong and the Labour Party and Liberals so weak that they cannot put up candidates against the Tories, what about the Socialist candidates? Won't they be opposing the Tories? And if our correspondent desires Socialism ought he not to welcome that development? Ought he not to be pleased that instead of Tories disputing with muddle-headed Labour Party reformists as to whether public assistance should be distributed with or without sympathy, there would be a real fight about Socialism and capitalism?

(5) In this paragraph our correspondent tells us that "some" (apparently not all) of the Labour Party candidates "do care, can govern, and even have the power to put up constructive argument." We will concede that they care, and that their attempts at "governing," i.e., at administering capitalism, have probably been no more disastrous for the workers than the attempts by Liberals and Tories, but what we do not agree with for one moment is that this is a step towards Socialism.

What our correspondent needs is to look at the actual experience of Labour Governments instead of standing with his head in a cloud of pious hopes and aspirations. Where and when did any Labour administration, central or local, escape the common fate of capitalist political parties of losing popularity through its responsibility for administering and maintaining capitalism? After two years of Labour Government in 1929-1931 the electors violently rejected the Labour Party at the 1931 election so little did they like the spectacle of Labour leaders who "do care, can govern," etc., etc.

After years of Social Democratic or coalition governments in Germany, the German workers were so disgusted that they rushed after Hitler. A similar story can be told of Australia, Austria and Spain.

Our correspondent goes on to say that experience of Labour administration will "educate" the electorate and make them "really desire a change." The change it really makes them desire is to get back to Toryism once more or stampede to Hitlerism, anything if only it is not more Labourism. It is true that the same factors again in time produce a further desire for change,

and this may be towards Labourism again, but that is not progress towards Socialism, but just the year-old game of political ins and outs, capitalism alone remaining unshaken.

The way to educate the workers about Socialism is to explain to them why capitalism has the evil results it does have, how Socialism will obviate them, and how Socialism can be achieved. Labourism does none of these. The typical Labour Party candidate does not know why capitalism produces these results (if he—or she—did he would not imagine that sympathy can cure them), does not know what Socialism is (being too busy on "practical politics" to have time for study), and does not know how Socialism is to be achieved.

ED. COMM.

## Death of a Comrade

The Party is poorer by the death of Comrade C. Barnes. For over twenty years a member of the late Watford Branch, he seldom missed a branch meeting, and, although occasionally unemployed, he never missed paying his dues. Neither bad weather nor three miles of country roads to trudge deterred our old comrade from what he considered his duty, and one could always count on the appearance of Charlie. He was neither a "writer" nor a "speaker," but he was a particularly fine specimen of an unobtrusive member. During the early part of the war he gave an unexpected exhibition of what such a member can do. When a fanatical mob besieged a party speaker and threatened to overturn the platform, Charlie, the mildest of men, rolled up his sleeves and invited them to "come on."

His early death is another of the countless tragedies associated with what is called "progress." He was a coach painter, known as one of the best in the county. (Incidentally he was an excellent landscape painter, but few knew of his work.) The invention of spray-painting led to his final dismissal. A long period of intermittent employment followed; and our comrade was a craftsman to whom inactivity was distasteful. How far this contributed to his final illness is a matter of opinion, but one can imagine the inner feelings of a highly skilled craftsman who is told at 53 that he is "too old." A ghastly commentary on our civilisation. For death there is no remedy, but our comrade's twenty years' unswerving devotion to the party was an inspiration to all who knew him, and they sadly feel his loss.

W. T. H.

## Correction.

The writer of the article "American Reformists in Difficulties" published last month tells us that the reference to the Secretary of the Communist Party having a chair broken over his head (middle of col. 1, page 118) is incorrect. The person concerned is the editor of the Communist *Daily Worker* not the Party Secretary.

## NOTICES OF MEETINGS & LECTURES

All meetings are open to non-members, admission free. Questions and discussion are welcomed.

**BLOOMSBURY.** Meetings will be held at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street (corner of Guildford Street), W.C.1. Friday evenings, at 8.30 p.m., as follows:—May 4th, "Eugenics," Com. James; May 11th, "Economic Development of Western Canada," Com. Sandy; May 18th, "Art and Socialism," Com. Kersley; May 25th, "Essentials of Socialist Thought," Com. Robertus.

**AN ECONOMICS CLASS**, conducted by A. Kohn, is held at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, each Wednesday evening, at 8 p.m.

**BATTERSEA.** Meetings will be held in the Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths (entrance in Burns Road), at 8.30 p.m., on Thursday, May 17th. Subject, "The Paris Commune," speaker, Robertus. Thursday, May 31st, "Fascism," R. Ambridge.

## OPEN AIR MEETINGS

### LONDON DISTRICT.

**Sunday** ... Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Finsbury Park, 11.30 a.m.  
Brockwell Park, 6 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m.  
Church Lane, Mitcham Road, S.W.17, 11.30 a.m.  
Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m.  
West Green Corner, Tottenham, 8 p.m.  
Liverpool Street, Walworth (Camberwell Gate), 11 a.m.  
Romford Market Place, 8 p.m.  
(1st Sunday in month only).  
Kings Hall Pic. Palace, Bakers Arms, Leyton, at 12 o'clock.

**Monday** ... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8, 8 p.m.  
Highbury Corner, N., 8 p.m.

**Wednesday** ... West Green Corner, Tottenham, 8 p.m.  
Windsor Road, Forest Gate, 8 p.m.  
Clock Tower, Avenue Road, Lewisham, 8 p.m.

**Thursday** ... Ridley Road, Dalston, 8 p.m.  
"Salmon and Ball," Bethnal Green, 8 p.m.

**Friday** ... Ilford Station, 8 p.m.

**Saturday** ... Rushcroft Road, Brixton (opp. Lambeth Town Hall), 7.30 p.m.  
Jolly Butcher's Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m.

### SHEFFIELD.

**Sundays** ... Barker's Pool, 7.30 p.m.

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## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

MAY,



1934

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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Twelve Months, post free .. .. .	2s. 6d.
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## Beginnings of the Socialist International

One of the significant features of the Annual Conference of the S.P.G.B., held at Easter, was the reading of a full and interesting report on the four Socialist parties with which the S.P.G.B. is associated, located in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States. We have often had to deal with questions from inquirers to whom the great stumbling block was the supposed backwardness of workers in countries overseas. Here is the tangible answer, the nucleus of the Socialist International of the future. Not the first attempt at international working class organisation by any means, but without any possibility of contradiction the first of its kind. It is the first time that an international working class organisation has been attempted and its beginnings achieved based upon a body of well-defined principles common to the whole of the associated parties. Hitherto the political internationals, the First International formed in 1864, the Second International formed in 1889, and the existing "Labour and Socialist International" and "Third (Communist) International," have had a common programme (more or less well defined) to which the separate parties have subscribed, but never before has there been an international the individual members of which are all recruited for an identical purpose, on an identical body of principles. The affiliated membership of the British Labour Party, for example, is included in the nominal millions of members of the "Labour and Socialist International." Yet

it is no exaggeration to say that the tie which binds the constituent parties of the L.S.I. is rather the personal contacts between the executives and headquarters officials—the rank and file members are little interested. Such a body is built on a foundation of sand. Its parts are kept together by judicious searchings for formulas which will give expression to vague sentiments while evading the underlying nationalistic antagonisms of outlook. Not so the international association of the S.P.G.B. and its companion parties. Each individual member is recruited on the same declaration of principles and fully aware of the implications of the Socialist message, emancipated from nationalistic prejudices. All are agreed on the aims and methods essential to the achievement of Socialism.

What this will mean can be illustrated from the collapse of the Second International in 1914. Practically every one of its parties rushed headlong into support of its own war-makers. The best that they could contemplate doing was to consider opposing war if the parties in the "enemy" countries were doing the same. The defection of only one from that weak position was sufficient to excuse the defection of the others. For the S.P.G.B. then, and for it and its associated parties now, there can be no question of "ifs." Each separate party and each separate individual, without having to wait for the others, turns to the common Declaration of Principles for guidance in each crisis that may arise. Each arrives at the same decision firmly grounded on his own convictions.

To return, therefore, to the present situation, it is gratifying that the parties in the countries referred to have not only held their own during the difficult early years of their existence, but are steadily extending their membership and circle of activities.

The Workers' Socialist Party (U.S.A.) increased its membership by over 25 per cent. in 1933; the Socialist Party of New Zealand by over 100 per cent.; the Canadian and Australian Parties have also made considerable increases. Classes, debates, and outdoor and indoor meetings are being held in centres scattered over the countries in question, the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, the "Western Socialist" and the "Socialist Review" are being sold to increasing numbers of readers. In these and other ways the Socialist message—identical in principle wherever capitalism holds sway—is being preached.

These efforts in bulk are all too meagre in relation to the vast outpourings of capitalist and reformist propaganda, but they are firmly grounded, and they are growing.

Let us all take heart from this and redouble our efforts, each in our own circle, to make the Socialist International, at no distant date, a new pillar of strength for Socialism.

## Banks and Credit

The following further letter has been received from Mr. Hobsbaum in continuation of the correspondence in the December, 1933, issue. Owing to pressure on space this further letter has been held up.

Tottenham, N.17.  
Dear Comrade,

If any further proof was needed to establish the truth of the two propositions on which my letter insisted, viz.,

That deposits result mainly from bank loans.

That such deposits greatly exceed the cash resources of the bank, your examples amply furnish it.

Your bank, which, starting with 10 units of currency, receives 90 units from A, has then a cash holding of 100 units. It lends 95 to B, thus furnishing him with the purchasing means which he previously did not possess. Whence came them? From A's deposit? No, because A still has the right to utilise his 90 whenever he wishes. The currency, eventually returning to the bank, creates an additional deposit, so that against a cash reserve of 100 units there are deposits of 185 units.

The following extract from the Macmillan report on finance clinches the matter:—

"It is not unnatural to think of the deposits of a bank as being created by the public through the deposits of cash representing savings. . . . But the bulk of the deposits arise out of the action of the banks themselves, for by granting loans or allowing money to be drawn on an overdraft a bank creates (sic) a credit in its books." Then follows an illustration similar to the one you gave, the cash deposits being £1,000. "The bank," continues the paragraph, "can carry on this process of lending until such times as the credits created represent nine times the amount of the original deposit of £1,000 in cash." (Para. 73.)

Further, "a bank which is actively creating deposits in this way will naturally find that a considerable part of the cheques drawn against them will be in favour of other banks. It will thus lose part of its cash reserves to those banks and must proceed to limit its loan operations if its normal cash ratio is to be maintained." This

is the meaning of McKenna's rebuke to Major Douglas. Since the loan granted by one bank may reach another bank in the form of a deposit, there is some ground for the view of Dr. Leaf that depositors create credit rather than banks; but this view ignores the fact that it is because loans have been made that the recipient of the cheques drawn against them is able to create the deposit. Also when Dr. Leaf refers to the bank as borrowing from the depositors he is isolating the transactions of a particular bank from the banking system in general, for reverting to your example of one bank, it is clear that it "borrowed" from A the 95 units of currency which it had lent to B and B had paid to A.

My argument about prices was designed to show that this credit creation is really a form of inflation. When money tokens are issued in excess of the gold which they are supposed to represent, the number of tokens for a given quantity of gold increases, and as the price of a commodity is the money expression of its value, it reacts as if gold had fallen in value, i.e., becomes more easy to produce and thus more plentiful.

The tendency for prices to vary thus is shown in the following figures:—

Amount of currency and bank deposits in 1914—£1,198 millions.	Amount of currency and bank deposits in 1920—£2,693 millions.
which is an increase of 125 per cent. If 100 represents the cost of living for 1914 the corresponding for 1920 is 225, showing, too, an increase of 125 per cent.	

The figures you give do not depict accurately the movement of bank deposits for 1920 and 1922, for I find that the monthly average for 1920 was £1,719,695,000 and for 1922 £1,797,539,000. Certainly not a rise of 8 per cent., as you say. Nor have I suggested, as forms the basis of your case, that variations in bank deposits solely condition the prices of commodities. Such variations are just factors among others, and in the light of the Marxian theory of value, can be understood as expressing altered relations between the value of gold and other commodities.

Yours Fraternally,  
S. HOBSBAUM.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.**

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



*Reply.*

Mr. Hobsbaum changes his ground so frequently, abandons arguments at one stage only to repeat them in a new form at another, and is so obviously vague in his own mind regarding the case he is trying to argue and its implications that it is difficult, even with the best will in the world, properly to understand what that case is. The one thing that is clear from Mr. Hobsbaum's letters is that he has consistently ignored our invitation to explain how banks "create" something out of nothing, why if they have this power they exercise it to their own detriment, as we have shown they must have done since 1929, and why deposits in commercial banks are "created," but not those in savings banks, building societies, co-operative societies, etc. When we have his explanations on these points and on certain others we have put to him some progress can be made.

In the meantime let us take what we conceive to be the main premises on which Mr. Hobsbaum's case rests, viz.:—

(1) Deposits result mainly from bank loans.

(2) Banks lend more than they borrow (i.e., than is deposited with them).

(3) Deposits greatly exceed the cash resources of the banks.

(4) Prices will tend to change with and in the same direction as the total of bank deposits and currency taken together.

The first and second propositions can be dealt with together. The revised statement in his last letter, that "deposits result mainly from bank loans," is very different from the earlier claim made by Mr. Hobsbaum that "deposits are created by the banks." When the argument is put in this revised form it at once leads to the question, "and from what do bank loans result?" Does Mr. Hobsbaum maintain that the answer to that is "from nothing"?

Let us look at this business of lending by banks a little more closely. If a bank makes a loan to a person we will call "A," the latter's ability to purchase is, of course, increased by the amount of the loan. If, however, he does not take up the loan immediately, but leaves on deposit with the bank the funds put at his disposal then the total of deposits is increased. But in neither case has the bank created anything. The position would be exactly the same if, instead of borrowing from a bank, A obtained a loan from some private individual and used the proceeds either to make purchases or to increase his bank deposit. Nobody has yet ventured to assert that when a private individual makes a loan he creates something out of nothing, and yet he does all that a bank does when it lends. Mr. Hobsbaum overlooks the fundamental fact that if, say, a bank credits A with

£1,000 as an advance, it has at that point lent him nothing. It has simply registered in its books its willingness to provide £1,000 when A calls for it. If A does not take up the loan, i.e., does not draw on the bank, then the latter can promise to lend B £1,000, just as any private individual can make promises of loans for an infinite amount so long as he is not called upon to implement those promises. If, however, A wants to draw the £1,000 the bank can only carry out its agreement to lend to him if it has £1,000 available. In other words, a bank, like a private individual, must be in possession of funds of its own or of other people's before it can effectively lend anything.

With the third proposition, as Mr. Hobsbaum now states it, we, of course, agree. But the fact that deposits greatly exceed the banks' cash reserves is no proof that the banks must have created all the deposits in excess of the amount of their cash, as Mr. Hobsbaum seems to think. In a previous reply we gave a simple illustration to show how it comes about that the total of deposits greatly exceeds the cash reserves without the "creation" of deposits by the banks. Mr. Hobsbaum is, however, too much wedded to mystery-mongering to be able to accept common-sense explanations. He contends that when the bank lends to B it does not lend what A has already deposited because the latter "still has the right to utilise his (deposit) whenever he wishes." There's the rub! He may have the "right," but if the bank has already lent to B, A cannot in fact utilise his deposit unless B repays the bank or other customers make deposits. When, later in the same letter, he writes that "it is clear that it (i.e., the bank) borrowed from A the units of currency which it has lent to B," Mr. Hobsbaum in fact admits this, which is the whole of our case.

On the fourth point Mr. Hobsbaum has altered his ground considerably since his first letter.

In that letter he made the categorical statement that "the bankers *simply* by increased lending . . . raise prices unless a proportionate increase in the productivity of labour follows." In his second letter he began to retreat and became less sweeping in the statement that "since (bank) loans swell the quantity of money . . . the tendency is for prices to rise unless, of course, a proportionate increase in the productivity of labour follows." Now, in his last letter he conveniently avoids the question we put to him about increased productivity of labour, adds currency to deposits, without any regard to the double reckoning that thereby results, makes mystifying statements about gold, money tokens, prices, etc., which are incomprehensible, and completely fails to support with reasons his argument that banks can create deposits and so can influence the movement of prices. The figures he gives are not a proof.

In fact, when Mr. Hobsbaum starts to deal with figures he is even less successful than when debating theory. We do not know where he obtained his totals of currency and bank deposits in 1914 and 1920. The figures he quotes do not agree with the usually accepted figures, compiled by the "Statist." Neither does the increase of £1,495 millions shown by his latest figures tally with the increase of £1,614 millions (i.e., £116 millions increase in currency plus £1,498 millions in deposits) given in his first letter. But we will let that pass. We cannot, however, allow Mr. Hobsbaum to support his case by wrongly quoting such an easily verifiable figure as the cost of living index. He states that the cost of living in 1920 was 225 above the 1914 level. In fact the average index figure for that year was 249, which detracts somewhat from Mr. Hobsbaum's claim that the change in prices and in the total of currency and bank deposits over this period were the same. On the supposed correspondence between the movement of prices and the total of deposits and currency between 1914 and 1920 we have the following comments to make:—

1.—Despite the fact that cheques are used to a much greater extent in wholesale than in retail trade Mr. Hobsbaum very carefully uses the retail cost of living index figure to measure price movements and ignores the Board of Trade wholesale price index. The latter rose by over 200 per cent. between 1914 and 1920, which fits very ill with our correspondent's case.

2.—He does not attempt to give a series of figures to support his argument. To compare price movements with deposit and currency changes between two arbitrarily chosen years only is valueless, and proves nothing. If figures are to prove anything they must be compared for a number of years, and changes in directional movement of one set of figures must be compared with directional changes in the other set. We challenge Mr. Hobsbaum to produce a *series* of figures which shows over a period prices moving with the total of deposits and currency. We also challenge him to explain on his theory the complete lack of correspondence which, as we have already shown, characterised the period from 1920 to date when prices, far from fluctuating in the same direction as deposits, moved contrariwise.

Mr. Hobsbaum also charges us with inaccuracy. He says that we did not "depict accurately the movement of bank deposits for 1920 to 1922." Where did we attempt to depict this movement? We did not mention the monthly averages for 1920 and 1922 or the movement of deposits for 1920 to 1922. What we correctly stated was that from May, 1920, to January, 1922 (i.e., between two definite dates) deposits rose by 8 per cent.

Mr. Hobsbaum has apparently taken his

figures for monthly averages from the MacMillan Committee's Report, and again has committed an error of statistical method. The figure he gives for 1920 is the monthly average for the whole year, while that quoted for 1922 is the average for ten months and excludes June and December. Again we will let this pass and merely draw Mr. Hobsbaum's attention to his statement that given an increase in deposits "the tendency is for prices to rise unless, of course, a proportionate increase in the productivity of labour follows." The most Mr. Hobsbaum asserts is that deposits fell by less than 1 per cent. between 1920 and 1922, which is an insufficient answer to the question we put to him when we asked whether, as changes in deposits did not suffice to explain the fall of 50 per cent. in prices between May, 1920, and January, 1922, he believed that labour had doubled its productivity over that period. It would appear that the two final paragraphs of his present letter are meant to be an answer. If words mean anything, then when Mr. Hobsbaum states that "variations (in bank deposits) are just factors among others (conditioning the prices of commodities) and . . . can be understood as expressing altered relations between the value of gold and other commodities," he is presumably trying to say two things:—

(1) That variations in deposits are one of the causes of price movements.

(2) That changes in the relative values of gold and other commodities are expressed in, and must, therefore, be a cause of, variations in bank deposits.

Mr. Hobsbaum cannot have it both ways. Movements in deposits cannot both condition prices of commodities and also express changes in the gold value of commodities, i.e., gold prices. Further, if bank deposits vary because of changes in gold prices of commodities what becomes of the claim that deposits vary in accordance with the amount of deposits created by the banks?

We have, finally, to protest against Mr. Hobsbaum's unwarranted pretence that the Marxian theory of value lends support to his confused views on banking, currency and credit. B. S.

The . . .

## Co-operative Movement

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### Forecasts and Fallacies

"*The Coming Struggle for Power*," by John Strachey, late Labour M.P., then a follower of Mosley, and, after that, a convert to communism, created quite a sensation when published in the United States, although it attracted less attention in Great Britain. It became the talk of the intellectual radicals, almost a "best seller," one of the "best books of the year," according to several "critics," and it won for its author the usual lecture tour in the States and the acceptance of his articles in many of the liberal journals he despises so much, all of which is evidence of the perturbation which exists in the breasts of hosts of thinking people as to the future of capitalist civilisation.

He opens with a good brief account of the nature of capitalism, its historic rise and the modifications in ideas and politics which it brought about. There is some distortion, possibly due to the need for brevity, and there are some errors of fact. It is not true, for instance, that the revolutionary French bourgeoisie had no use for monarchy in 1789 (p. 26). For good reasons they decidedly favoured a constitutional monarchy, and almost three years elapsed before they were driven reluctantly to republicanism by persistent counter-revolution.

In Part 2 Strachey effectively riddles the arguments and the theories of certain capitalist economists, more particularly Keynes and Salter, who have endeavoured to tell the world how the depression can be cured and further ones avoided. He shows that their theories either do not touch the roots of the problem or are impossible of application. In the latter category he places attempts to restore the pre-war condition of relative freedom in international trade and also the new-born schemes for a "planned" capitalist economy.

Strachey gives no evidence to show that the present world-wide depression is basically different from preceding ones, however much it has been modified by the effects of the war. With the evidence of recovery and great expansion following previous crises, it is rash indeed to prophesy permanent economic decline to follow this one. Our author is cautious and here and there he admits the possibility of temporary recovery—but only in a sort of aside. His main argument undoubtedly rests on permanent economic decline. His treatment of the cause of crises is peculiar, especially for an alleged Marxist. He outlines at length the theory of Keynes and others that crises occur when the volume of capital goods (factories, machinery, etc.) ceases to correspond with the funds the capitalists have saved for investment. Though he does not anywhere unequivocally support this theory, he does say that with it "orthodox economic science has at length

approached the diagnosis of the real cause of capitalist crisis" (113). But he also says it is "very far from being the whole story" (111). What the whole story is—the reader discovers to his surprise—is not disclosed anywhere in the book, a book which sets out to deal precisely with this question. All that we get is the very general statement that "crises are due to the anarchy of production, which must always characterise any system dependent upon the mechanism of the market" (113). Even more surprising is that throughout this long book, which aims to deal with the chief characteristics of capitalism to-day, the swift and ever-growing capacity to produce wealth in every variety, and in superabundance, is only mentioned in the most perfunctory way, yet, obviously, this factor will be of vital importance in considering the future of the system whichever way it develops. However, in a recent article ("The Nation," January 10th, 1934) Strachey, in explaining the crisis, does stress "the appalling gap between the power of the capitalists to produce and the power of the workers to consume."

The argument for mass revolts of the workers—Strachey assumes that they would be on communist lines—is chiefly based on the assumption that the wealth of the capitalist class has now begun to decline and that they will cease to grant or to maintain at their present level social reforms for the workers. He rashly instances the widows' pensions of 1929 as "the very last sop which British capitalism was able to throw to the workers" (308). "There does not seem to be room for doubt that, neglecting the periodic ups and downs of the trade cycle, the whole trend of the wealth, and, consequently, of the strength, of the capitalist classes of the West is steeply downwards" (376). This is a pretty example of "begging the question." It assumes what is to be proved, namely, that the decline since 1929 is not part of a trade cycle. He may be right in his view that there will be no recovery comparable in extent with those of the past, but he certainly does not prove it or provide any real evidence. It is little better than a guess. Up until 1929 there was a general expansion of production throughout the world. The only countries showing a sharp decline in national wealth since the war are the defeated central powers who suffered great losses in territorial or other confiscations. Moreover, though there has been during the great depression a precipitous decline in cash values, wealth in goods has never been so abundant nor so cheap. Vast stores of every imaginable kind of commodity lie unconsumed. It is true that in the bygone days of "no state interference" the great surplus wealth which accumulated before and during a crisis lay untouched, except in so far as it was destroyed, until it was slowly absorbed in the "shrunk-

market. But we are getting further away from *laissez-faire* every day. The U.S. government has been buying large stocks of surplus foodstuffs and has recently adopted the policy of using these in direct relief of the unemployed, a method which will probably be widely adopted in the future.

Many reforms, moreover, are economically a saving, make for a smoother-running system and pay for themselves. Finally, the capitalists fear widespread, active discontent of the workers more than anything else—except the growth of Socialism—and, at least in America, the effect of the depression has been, through the N.R.A. and other recovery acts, to establish a whole series of palliatives, minimum wage laws, abolition of child labour, etc., etc. True the concessions are not lavish—but when have merely discontented workers demanded much more than work and bread? As for chronic, large-scale unemployment, in many countries the capitalists are now experimenting with self-supporting, non-competitive work schemes which may prove partially successful in drawing off or cooling down the most "dangerous," the young and vigorous, amongst the unemployed.

It must be remembered that, in the future, as in the past, that most important of all the political problems of the bourgeoisie will not be trade depression, nor foreign policy, but the problem of retaining the political support of the majority of the workers. Savage repression of mass strikes and sporadic revolts during times of special tension and exasperation does not, and cannot, solve this problem. It can neither help to keep the majority subservient to capitalist ideas and policies, nor can it prevent the slow enlightenment as to the ever more obvious solution of the problem of poverty in the midst of superabundance.

In the most difficult times of the future, whatever the depth of economic depression, production, and production on a massive scale, with all the complex parts of the vast sub-divided organisation of modern industry and transportation working with substantial efficiency and continuity, must go on. The only alternative is famine and pestilence on the most disastrous scale ever known. And, unlike the relatively simple industrial systems of the old slave empires, modern highly integrated industry cannot function with the mass of the workers permanently cowed, sullen and desperate, and ready for violent outbreaks at the slightest let-up of the iron heel. Rest assured some of the capitalists and their scientific advisers know these facts full well, will think over them a good deal in the trying days that are to come, and, in fact, will give more thought as to the measures necessary to maintain their hold upon the workers' minds and prevent them from getting "out of hand," than ever they did in the past.

At all events, so long as the mass of the workers accept capitalistic ideas and support the essential bases of the system, we hold that it is premature, to put it mildly, to declare that the propertied class are up against insoluble difficulties, are practically at the end of their resources, and cannot make at least some important adaptations of their system, some vital compromises amongst themselves, in order to prolong its life.

Of course, Strachey has soon been proved wrong about the capitalists not being able to afford more reforms. Already the Government have committed themselves to restoring all, or part, of the 1931 economy cuts.

As for the suicide of capitalism in vast wars, we believe, for one thing, that Strachey underestimates the psychological effect of the fearful destructiveness of existing and future weapons of war, which, in use, will bring wholesale death to great numbers of the civilian population, capitalist as well as worker, and the likelihood that this may do much to bring about some form of machinery for the avoidance of major wars—especially after a dose or two of their results.

An excellent section of Strachey's book is his discussion of the break-up of the traditional ideas of capitalism. The chapter on the social basis, function and trends of religion, is well done. He exposes with telling criticism the intellectual contradictions of Freud, Wells, Aldous Huxley and others, and he describes the marked effects of the present period of social flux in the fields of science and literature. It is, however, a mistake to call all this the "decay of capitalist culture." What we are really witnessing is the passing of the individualist, liberal tradition, but, simultaneously, a new form of capitalist ideology and culture shows signs of establishing itself adapted to the newer state-regulated capitalism.

In one chapter the author marshals good arguments to show the virtual impossibility of the establishment and perpetuation of a completely planned and monopolistic state capitalism, with competition, along with private accumulation, entirely eliminated. This should be compared with the treatment of this question in the SOCIALIST STANDARD for May, 1911.

Strachey makes a fairly effective and, in some respects, novel analysis of the reformist labour movements, in particular, of the British Labour Party. Instead of indulging, as most communist writers have done, in oceans of vituperation at the pseudo-Socialist labour leaders as "social fascists" and traitors, he makes out a neat theory as to their social function as conscious or unconscious tools of the employing class. As usual, he stretches his theory unduly, even to the point of calling labour "the principal and essential bulwarks of capitalism" (293), which is nonsense.

Though there is an important element of truth in Strachey's contention that the purely



verbal "Socialism" of the Social Democrats and Labourites serves to appease the workers' aversion to economic oppression and their longing for some hope of a happier future, becoming, as he puts it, like religion, the opium of the people, it is unsound to attribute to this purely sentimental factor the continued support of capitalism by the labourite workers. Strachey says of the post-war German S.D.P.: "Only the truly marvellous grip of that machine, based on its close knowledge of the psychological needs of the upper sections of the German workers, and its ability to satisfy those needs to perfection, *in fantasy*, could possibly have induced the advanced German masses to suffer *in reality* the unparalleled sacrifices and humiliations which a hard-pressed German capitalism has had to demand of them" (298). The complete collapse of that machine at the onslaught of victorious Hitlerism may have taught Strachey that its grip was not so very "marvellous" after all. The truth of the matter is that only a minority of Labour supporters have ever taken very seriously, or thought deeply about, the ultimate "Socialist" aims of their party. The majority, with their thoughts on the day-to-day struggle of work, wages, prices and doles have been recruited by promises of immediate relief through reforms—which have appeared plausible to them because of their general acceptance of capitalistic ideas in economics and morality—the rights of private property and the like—and their consequent ignorance of Socialist principles.

Strachey over-rates the rôle and power of labour leaders, though, in this, he is far from consistent. On page 300 he says that the force of the workers' movement is "sufficient to make the continuance of the senile capitalisms of Western Europe impossible, if the leaders of social democracy dreamt of using it for such a purpose." But on page 309 he tells us that, "Just as the strong hands of economic necessity have moulded the Labour Party itself, so that party has gradually, by a process of political natural selection, produced the types necessary to play the parts that had to be played. To suppose that things could have been otherwise, if only MacDonald had been firmer . . . is, vulgarly, to misread history."

One of the choicest bits in the book is the true and caustic characterisation of MacDonald. Writing of the man's meaningless, bewildering oratory, always overflowing with high-sounding principles, Strachey comments: "The real issues involved, the hard facts of every question, the actual play of interests, must be hidden in every possible way . . . the reason is obvious. When Mr. MacDonald tries to conceal everything behind his great fog of words, he is really trying to conceal one thing alone, and that one thing is the steadily growing and inescapable clash of

class interests. For, if that is not hidden, will it not one day 'upset the whole conception of ordered evolution'? And one must not upset Mr. MacDonald's conceptions" (312).

As a corrective to Strachey's present denunciation of MacDonald it needs to be remembered that Strachey was one of those who worshipped at MacDonald's feet.

It is Strachey's opinion that successful proletarian revolts will first occur in those relatively backward countries in which capitalism developed much later than in Britain. Presumably, excluding the U.S.A., he writes: "We find that in such areas the capitalist class has not now, nor ever has had, sufficient wealth to impose its outlook upon considerable sections of the workers; that it has had neither the skill in collaboration nor the decision in repression, which has characterised the social policy of the British ruling class; that a dozen different political complications have forbidden the capitalist classes of such areas to devote themselves to the task of controlling their workers" (383). He writes this after having devoted pages to demonstrating how well the capitalists almost the world over have succeeded in achieving this "collaboration" and control through the medium of Social Democratic parties and labour unions, and, we may add, through the use of many other mediums he does not stress, the schools, press and radio, religion, and the hypnotising rituals and sentiments of patriotism.

It is unusual that Strachey, who calls himself a communist, has almost nothing to say, except for sundry references to violent struggle and the necessity for proletarian dictatorship, as to the ways in which the workers are to be roused, organised and trained for the revolution. This may mean that he is dubious about the present tactics of the Communist parties. He scarcely mentions any actual C.P. and conspicuously avoids reference to the British party, notwithstanding the fact that he deals at special length with British conditions. This relieves him of the necessity of explaining away or defending the support which the British communists have, at Moscow's orders, given to the Labour Party he so vigorously denounces.

Enthusiasm for Russia leads Strachey into some absurd mis-statements. For example: "One hundred and sixty millions have . . . leapt out of the kingdom of necessity towards the kingdom of freedom; they have decided for themselves that it was from this turn of the spiral of history that men achieved communism" (259). How glad the starving Russian peasants must have been last year to know that they had left the "kingdom of necessity" and had "decided for themselves" that collectives are superior to individual farms, communism to individualism. He points out that the Soviet Union is not yet a communist state, but he is optimistic enough, we may even say gul-

libe enough, to hope that "by the end of the Second Five Year Plan, in 1937, that is, it will be possible to speak of a communist society in Russia" (354).

Though there has been no space in this criticism for an extended weighing of all Strachey's analyses and forecasts, enough has been written to show that the book, despite several interesting and useful discussions, contains many errors of omission and commission which render it an unsafe and unsound guide both to the present world situation and to the developments of the future.

R. W. H.

(Workers' Socialist Party, U.S.A.)

## Forty Wasted Years

### THREE LABOUR LEADERS LOOK BACK

Three men well on in years, each of whom has spent a lifetime in the Labour Party and Independent Labour Party, have been looking back at the work those parties have done, and asking themselves whether it was good. Two of them, Lord Snowden and Mr. George Lansbury, have risen from obscurity to become Ministers of the Crown. The third, Mr. J. T. Abbott, has been active and influential in the I.L.P., of which he was for many years organiser. They are all three the possessors of qualities which would have made them an asset to any movement which had their undivided allegiance. They have all had their hour of triumph. Now they are all three either openly alienated from the movements they helped to form or putting forward a hostile policy. Lord Snowden, after serving in two Labour Governments, and being largely instrumental in swinging over working-class votes to the National Government which rose on the wreckage of the last Labour Government, soon left the National Government also and is now isolated from every organised movement, a lonely figure in the House of Lords. He tells us (*John Bull*, April 21st) that the "best Government I have known" was a Liberal Government. "The years 1906 to 1914 were productive of a larger output of beneficial legislation than in any similar period in our history. . . . I have no hesitation in saying that the Liberal Government of 1906 contained a larger number of able men than any Government I have known."

Mr. J. T. Abbott, after forty years in the I.L.P., finds himself compelled to resign, and is already outside the Labour Party. Late in life he must face the heartbreaking task of beginning all over again. In 1893 it was the Independent Labour Party; in 1934, he says, it is necessary to form an Independent Socialist Party! He partly realises now how wrong and useless the

old effort was, and must be full of regret that he did not learn the lesson many years earlier.

Lastly there is Mr. George Lansbury, who for many weeks past has been laid up with a broken thigh. Pondering over the activities of his party he confesses (*Clarion*, April 14th and 21st) that he has had to throw over many views he has held for years. He sees now the meaningless nature of reforms—"like baling out the ocean with a tea-spoon." He admits that some of his present views may conflict with Labour Party policy, but nevertheless declares against compromise, against fighting elections on any issue but Socialism, and against any more alliances with the Liberals. He states as clearly as he knows how that the only solution is common ownership and democratic control of the means of life. He admits that in saying these things he may be contradicting what he has been saying before.

The significance of this declaration is not that it commits the Labour Party, of which Mr. Lansbury is leader—in that quarter it will be passed over and forgotten in a few weeks—nor that it means a deep and permanent change of attitude on his part. When he finds that the whole life of the Labour Party depends on a continuance of reform and compromise, as it does, he will either have to toe the line or he will be gradually superseded. It is almost a certainty that when he recovers his health he will again be absorbed in the day-to-day work of vote-catching and reformism and his sick-bed thoughts will be forgotten by him as by others. Already there are renewed talks of a Liberal-Labour alliance, which the *Clarion* receives sympathetically.

Nevertheless, the confession of past errors, and Lansbury's attempt to work out a new and different "profession of faith" has a significance. It shows, as the S.P.G.B. has claimed from its formation, that serious study of the working-class position and of the results of reformist activities cannot logically lead to any other conclusions than those we have been proclaiming high and low for thirty years. In spite of all the weight of influence against his appreciating these truths, Mr. Lansbury has been unable honestly to escape agreeing with at least some of them.

It is not a pleasant thought, either for the three chief actors or for their admirers, that their words and actions should testify to the complete and irretrievable failure of the Labour Party and I.L.P. For the working class, however, there is no need for despair. The forces and experiences which in the eyes of those who think have robbed the Labour Party of every vestige of a plausible case for reformism, have given the Socialist movement confidence and courage based on the confirmation that our case is sound and unanswerable.

As belief in Labourism declines, Socialist advances.

H.



## How Shall We Attain Socialism?

The above question is raised by a sympathetic correspondent who, nevertheless, confesses himself to be "a sceptic as to the fertility of Socialist endeavour with our contemporaries." He rather looks to "educational improvements, in the course of capitalism's development and necessities, to produce in time, brains more apt for organised action to end the criminal absurdities which crush us."

People who take this view misunderstand, to some degree, the point of view of the S.P.G.B. We do not hold that our propaganda is the only force making for Socialism, nor even that it is the chief force. We hold that the class struggle in its entirety moulds the minds of the workers "nearer to our heart's desire," thus preparing them for the necessary action.

The maturity of the working class can only be expressed in the form of a consciously organised political party aiming at Socialism. After thirty years that party is still numerically small. Is this to say, therefore, that its work has been ineffective or that no development has taken place in the minds of the workers meanwhile?

Our correspondent states that he has returned to England after twenty years abroad. Can he see no difference in the political topics which interest the workers generally? Unless development is definitely taking place how does he account for the enormous relative increase in popular interest in the ideas associated with the names of Marx and Engels? Who amongst us twenty years ago anticipated the inclusion by Messrs. Dent of "Capital" (volume I) in such a popular series as the Everyman Library, or thought for a moment that the I.L.P. would one day claim to be a Marxist party?

Writing of the SOCIALIST STANDARD our correspondent admits that "he had, indeed, feared that it had 'gone under,' and is agreeably surprised to see that, on the contrary, it is very much alive." Is not this in itself significant of much? In spite of the war-fever and the red-herrings which were introduced by the Communists, the S.P.G.B. has maintained its integrity and its publications. When one reflects upon the various forms of mass-hysteria which have threatened to swamp our little craft during the past twenty years the remarkable thing is that it has kept afloat. Yet although they have been alternately swept by conflicting emotions the members of our class are being repeatedly brought to earth by economic development.

That development underlies all educational and other improvements, and although its effects are only slowly appreciated they cannot be indefinitely ignored. The S.P.G.B., therefore, continues to bring this development before the workers, showing how the existence of capitalism

prevents it from being a means of happiness and well-being to them, and showing, further, how it renders futile the reforms propagated by other parties.

E. B.

## BRANCH DIRECTORY

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.
- BIRKENHEAD.**—Communications to H. Dawson, 26, Vulcan Street, Birkenhead, Cheshire.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.
- BLOOMSBURY.**—Secretary, M. Sandy, 269, Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1. Branch meets every Friday at 7.30 p.m. at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road).
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- DAGENHAM.**—Branch meets alternate Mondays (from April 16th) at 8 p.m., Pettitts' Farm, Heathway. Sec. J. Pegman, 67, Maxey Road, Dagenham, Essex.
- ECOLE.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. L.E.A., 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Lancs.
- EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place.
- GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month, 8 p.m., at 98 Naburn Street, Glasgow, C.5. Communications to M. Falconer at above address.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Tuesday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., E. Chalkley, 21, Bridge Street, E.9.
- HULL.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at York Room, The Metropole. Communications to Sec., at 62, Ampleforth Grove, Willerby Road.
- ISLINGTON.**—All communications to N. A. Bishop Argyle Court, 105, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Branch meets from 8 to 10 p.m. on Wednesday.
- LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., Mrs. E. C. Snell, 17, Theobald Road, E.17. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.
- MANCHESTER.**—Branch meets fortnightly (Mondays). Communications to B. A. Lee, 19, Emery Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets 8 p.m., 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, at 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Discussion at 9.30 p.m. Sec., W. M. Veal, 78, Wornington Road, W.10.
- SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., G. H. Southgate, 64, Pickering Rd., Neepsend. Branch meets alternate Mondays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 10, Friend's School, Hartshead.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in the month, at 8 p.m. at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec. at above address.
- SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover St., S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.
- STEPNEY.**—Sec., B. Orinsky, 54, Whitehouse Lane, E.1. Phone, East 5888. Branch meets on Fridays at 8 p.m. Lectures on alternate Fridays.
- TOOTING.**—Communications to W. Mehew, 19, Littleton Street, S.W.18.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to A. Cash, Junr., 51 Morrison Avenue, N.17.
- WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall School, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.
- WEMBLEY.**—Communications to H. G. Holt, 6, Danethorpe Road, Wembley, Middlesex. Branch meets every Friday at 7.45 p.m. at Cafe-Restaurant over 170, High Road, Wembley.
- WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

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*Capitalism . . .  
seeks to solve  
the unemploy-  
ment problem,  
but fails.*

*Socialism . . .  
abolishes the  
problem itself.*

## Marx: According to Humpty-Dumpty

"What Marx Really Meant." By G. D. H. Cole. (Gollancz, 5s. net.)

"It's a stupid name enough!" *Humpty-Dumpty interrupted impatiently, "What does it mean?" "Must a name mean something?" Alice asked doubtfully. . . . "When I use a word," Humpty-Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less."*

Mr. G. D. H. Cole has the same impudent disregard for the ordinary meaning of words. The title of a book is usually expected to give some indication of the contents. When, therefore, a book has the title "What Marx Really Meant," it is reasonable to assume that it will contain an

account of Marx's theories. When the authority is G. D. H. Cole, however, one may wonder what are his qualifications to act as an interpreter of Marx, for he is not a Marxian, and has never given any evidence of beginning to understand Marx (even Mr. E. H. Carr, a non-Marxist, in his recently published biography of Marx, groups Cole among the pseudo-Marx-

ians), but this does not alter one's anticipations regarding the subject-matter of a book with the title "What Marx Really Meant." In other words, the plain man will give words their plain meaning and expect to find in a book with this title a plain statement of what Marx meant. He will be sadly disappointed. There is no connection between the contents and the title. The title is a sheer catch-penny label for a book which has as little connection with Marx as it has with common-sense political understanding. The book is undiluted Cole, with Marx's name dragged in to catch the unwary.

Even Mr. Cole cannot live up to the impertinence of the title, and early explains that his book is "not meant either as an exposition or as a criticism of Marx's doctrines," but is intended "to disentangle from Marx's teaching, from what is dead or no longer appropriate what remains alive and capable of that process of growth and adaptation which is the prerogative of living things." If that was his object, he ought to have called his book, "What Cole happens to mean — at the moment."

He betrays a certain amount of nervousness at setting himself up as an authority on Marx, and at dragging Marx into the hotch-potch of his ideas. After asking his readers to make "due allowance for (his) shortcomings as a guide," he attempts to forestall criticism with the following statement:—

"Some Marxists will say that what I have been stating is not Marxism at all, but a radically different doctrine. Even if that were so, it would not matter, provided that mine was the better doctrine for to-day. But I think what I have

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written is in essence Marxist, in that sense in which Marxism is to-day a living force, and not the opium of the Socialist orthodox." As a piece of impudent writing, this would be hard to beat.

Before dealing more in detail with the book, one other instance should be noted. Marx put forward a theory to explain the evolution of society. To that theory he gave a name, the Materialist Conception of History. He did so intentionally. He used the term materialist because that is what he meant, and Marxians have always referred to that theory by that name. Now along comes this writer of detective stories, and announces: "I shall write 'realist' in place of 'materialist,' for I can see no point at all in that form of servility which clings obstinately to a name." It will easily be appreciated that after being connected with thirty different political organisations, Mr. Cole is not likely to cling obstinately to anything.

The book is a difficult one to review on account of the author's method. He has jumbled up together his interpretation of certain of Marx's doctrines with a statement of his own political views. His aim seems to be to support those views by relating them to Marxian principles—or what he conceives to be Marxian principles. Where he is expounding Marx he reveals such a complete lack of understanding of everything Marx wrote, that the doubt at once arises whether, notwithstanding the fact that he wrote an introduction to the Everyman edition of "Capital," he has ever seriously read much more than the "Communist Manifesto." It is inevitable, therefore, that what he claims to be a reading of the "signs of our times by a method which is largely that of Marx," bears absolutely no relation to Marxian thought. No Marxian could be guilty of the errors of analysis contained in this book, while the recommendations of policy in it are, in the main, contrary to the whole of Marx's teaching.

As an example of the kind of statement in this book that raises a doubt as to whether the author is really acquainted with Marx's writings, the following may be quoted:—

It is sometimes suggested that Marx did believe the coming of Socialism to be inevitable, and held that men could, by their conduct, only advance or delay its coming, or cause it to come in a more or less satisfactory form. It is quite possible that Marx did hold this.

If Mr. Cole knows what he is writing about, why this indefiniteness? Marx, of course, made specific statements which gave clear expression to his view. In the *Communist Manifesto*, he and Engels wrote:—

The bourgeoisie produces its own gravediggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.

This passage was reproduced as a footnote to "Capital," to which, as mentioned above, Mr.

Cole wrote an introduction. (For footnote, see Everyman edition, p. 847.)

It is undoubtedly true that, as Mr. Cole states, Marx, if he had been alive and writing to-day, would not have written "exactly as he wrote in 1848, or 1859, or 1867, or 1883." but that is no justification for claiming for non-Marxian ideas the support of Marx's name. Despite Mr. Cole's disclaimers, to suppose that Marx would have propounded the theories foisted off on him by Mr. Cole is "the rankest injustice to Marx." Mr. Cole uses the following specious arguments for putting forward his own ideas as being related to those of Marx:—

If the structure of classes has changed since Marx's day, as I have tried to show that it has, the theory which Marx formulated as appropriate to the class conditions of his day can no longer be adequate to meet the needs of the present time, at all events until it has been modified and adapted in conformity with these changes. Every Marxist is compelled by his Marxism to be a "revisionist" . . . no Marxist can escape revisionism without denying the dialectical principle.

It is sheer sophistry to pretend that the dialectical principle which requires that things should not be treated and considered as though they were static, and insists that everything is in process of development, necessarily implies that ideas originated, say, seventy years ago, must be inapplicable to-day. In that case the dialectical view would itself be obsolete! Even if the dialectical principle did require a modification, it would not follow that revision should properly take place on the Labour Party lines followed by Mr. Cole. Further, the major premise of his argument is false. If he had properly appreciated what Marx meant by capitalists and proletariat, and by the class struggle between them, he would not have been deceived into believing that "the structure of classes has changed since Marx's day." Far from changing, that structure stands to-day even more clearly discernible and defined than when Marx wrote. There can be no doubt now that in capitalist society there are but two classes, one dependent upon the possession of property, the other property-less and dependent upon the sale of its labour power. Like all "intellectuals," Mr. Cole tries to blur the clear-cut distinction between the two classes. For him the proletariat consists "in the advanced parliamentary countries of Western Europe . . . of a central mass of manual workers and their families, shading off at one end into the unemployables, and at the other into the 'black coats' of the middle class." In the world of Mr. Cole there appear to be a large number of classes, for he writes of "the middle classes, that is, the classes between the governing groups of the bourgeoisie and the wage-earners," who "have increased markedly as a percentage of the entire population," and who have "assumed the new character given to them by the increased

wealth of modern Societies." Patronising snobbery prevents Mr. Cole plunging himself and his fellow "intellectuals" down among the "manual workers," so he puts forward concepts of middle classes which have no basis in reality. Unless the existence of only two classes is denied, the whole case of the "intellectuals" falls to the ground and they cease, as a group, to have any special political significance. Mr. Cole claims that an alliance "of the proletariat and new petit bourgeoisie against the large capitalists and the reactionary petit bourgeois groups . . . is the only possible way of achieving Socialism by peaceful and constitutional means, and probably the only way of averting the spread of Fascist dictatorships." The fact is, however, that whenever the proletariat (by which is meant what Marx meant, namely, all those who are dependent upon the sale of their labour power), want to achieve Socialism they can do so by the use of their own unaided power, and without the advice or leadership of "intellectuals."

How far Mr. Cole is from understanding Marx's analysis of Capitalism is revealed in his remarks about Russia, of which the following are samples. He writes: "The U.S.S.R. . . . has already thrown Capitalism over . . . under the new Russian system it is utterly impossible for the characteristic dilemma of Capitalism ever to arise . . . the Russian system does ensure that as much as they can possibly produce will find a market, so that over-production and under-consumption and also unemployment, save as a temporary consequence of friction in the process of industrial change, simply cannot arise." (Pages 61 and 70.) It is difficult to say whether that displays the greater ignorance of Marx or of conditions in Russia. Capitalism in the sense in which Marx understood it, as a system of society based on the exploitation of a class of property-less wage labourers exists to-day in Russia, just as much as in England. Unemployment has certainly not been banished. The Russians have also been faced with the problem of over-production. Like other capitalist producers, they have had to curtail production because they could not sell various products in the world market at a profit during the depression.

It may be wondered how people like Mr. Cole contrive to achieve their reputations as authorities on Marx, in face of their patent ignorance. It is to a large extent the result of mutual back-scratching. For example, that other self-constituted authority on Marx, Professor H. J. Laski reviewed Mr. Cole's book in the *Manchester Guardian*, and praised it as providing "a really admirable summary of the Marxian theory of value." Unwary readers may be impressed by Professor Laski's judgment, but others will know that this Professor of Political Science does not

understand Marx's economic theories, and has confessed as much. When he wrote his "Communism" (see review in *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, July, 1927), so little was he able to deal with this aspect that he borrowed his "criticism" of the Labour Theory of Value from a book called "Karl Marx's Capital," written by Professor Lindsay, and Lindsay knows no more about the subject than Laski or Cole.

That is by the way. Here it is impossible to examine in detail Cole's summary of the theory. Whether the Marxian Theory of Value is right or wrong, nobody who had mastered even the first few chapters of "Capital" could ever believe he was representing Marx's ideas in writing: "Marx's 'value' or 'exchange value' is, then . . . purely and simply objectified use value. It is the real amount of objective utility which a commodity possesses as a result of the labour bestowed upon it." What this all means only Cole and, presumably, Laski, know. Fortunately it is not Marxian.

It is to be hoped that nobody will be enticed into buying or reading the book in the belief that it is a statement of Marxist principles. It is nothing of the kind. It is a vastly irritating sermon on Labourism by a man who, incidentally, has now discovered that his fellow "intellectuals" were wrong when, a short time ago, they proclaimed that Capitalism was in ruins and unable to stand the burden of paying for further reforms or an extension of social services. At any rate, he writes that "the history of the past few years has very plainly illustrated the toughness and resisting power of Capitalism . . . even in face of prolonged world depression; and who is bold enough to say that the present depression, deep and long as it has been, will not pass and be succeeded by a phase of capitalist revival?"

Another author, with whom Mr. Cole claims some acquaintance, is Wm. Cobbett, for he wrote an introduction to Cobbett's "Grammar." Cobbett has a passage which can be fittingly applied to this book:—"the pompous tone, the self-conceit that is manifest from the beginning to the end, forbid us to give (the author) credit for sincerity when he confesses his deficiencies, and tell us that the confession is one of those clumsy traps so often used with the hope of catching unmerited applause."

There is some advice in Mr. Cole's book which we can heartily endorse, contained in the last paragraph:—

Having presented in this book my conception of what Marxism really means, I can only ask the reader, if he is in any doubt, to go and study for himself what Marx wrote, and not merely what others have written about him.

In conclusion there is one thing that should be made clear. The S.P.G.B. has been described by Cole as a "body of rigid Marxians." (*Enc. Brit.*, Vol. 32, Page 507.) It might have been



thought, therefore, that the author of a book supposed to deal with Marx would be particularly careful to ensure that it was sent to us for review. This book has not been sent to us. We wasted 5s. on buying it. B. S.

## Roosevelt's "New Deal"

The whole world has been watching with interest the progress and results of President Roosevelt's "New Deal," more correctly described as American capitalism's strenuous effort to rescue itself from the morass of depression.

After three years of deepening crisis, falling prices and wages, increasing bankruptcies, and unemployment that reached the unheard of total of from 15 to 17 millions, the country was seething with political unrest. The Hoover régime, which had attempted to conjure the depression away by wish-magic and optimism, but had otherwise done practically nothing to alleviate the economic dislocation, was overwhelmed in the democratic landslide of the 1932 elections. Roosevelt and his party swept the country with their attacks on the "criminal inactivity" of the Republicans, and with lavish promises of a New Deal that would bring back "Prosperity."

In general, although there is much intertwining of interests in the propertied class the Republican Party stands for big business and the financial interests. The Democrats are the party of the smaller business men and the mass of the farmers. The most voluble, agitated and organised of all those adversely affected by the depression were precisely these latter groups. Millions of small property owners were hopelessly in debt, their savings gone or tied up in closed banks. The farmers' earnings and standard of life had been declining for years before the crisis which but intensified their problems. Amongst the workers cut after cut in wages, plus mass unemployment and the constant threat of it, had generated a great volume of discontent. This was, however, largely unorganised and inarticulate, notwithstanding sporadic outbursts. All these elements looked to Roosevelt as to a messiah. Emotional tension at the time of the elections was intense and enthusiasm for the victorious "hero" almost universal, even amongst many of the rank and file Republicans.

Immediately after its inauguration in March, 1933, the new Government was granted extraordinary emergency powers by the overwhelmingly Democratic Congress. Then came the passing, almost without criticism, of a series of drastic laws drawn up by Roosevelt and his group of economic advisers which set up a whole battery of new administrative bodies for a concerted attack upon the problems of "recovery" and "relief." Of these bodies the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and the National Industrial Recovery

Administration (the N.R.A.) are the most important. As we are chiefly concerned with the interests of the industrial workers, it is the N.R.A., and particularly its labour provisions, that we shall mainly consider.

The N.R.A. came into existence in June, 1933. First it established a General or "Blanket" Code of Fair Competition, which all employers were asked to sign and adhere to. A national propaganda campaign, using all means of ballyhoo, mobilised the vast pro-Roosevelt sentiment behind the scheme. By August 1st over 700,000 employers had signed and received the badge of the Blue Eagle. Compulsion was threatened if persuasion failed—a piece of bluff characteristic of many aspects of the New Deal.

The Blanket Code established a maximum working week of from thirty-five to forty hours, minimum wages varying from twelve dollars to fifteen dollars per week, and made certain classes of child labour illegal. Section 7a of the code guaranteed workers the right of collective bargaining through representatives of their own choosing. The N.R.A. further called upon each industry to draw up a code adapted to its own special needs, each code to be in harmony with the Blanket Code and approved in its details by the N.R.A. The following condensed account of the Steel Industries Code is given as a sample:—

"The Steel Code . . . provided for a trial period of ninety days. At the end of this period the steel companies declared it workable . . . It provided for a forty-hour week of labour averaged over three months, with a maximum for each employee of not more than forty-eight hours in a 6-day week. The right of collective bargaining was conceded. Representatives of the N.R.A. were empowered to inspect the records of the Iron and Steel Institute to obtain full 'information concerning production, shipment, sales and unfilled orders, hours of labour, rates of pay and other conditions of employment,' in order to stabilise production." (*The World Almanac*, 1934.)

To date, over 400 codes have been put into force and it is estimated that about 20 millions of workers or 90 per cent. of those eligible come within their regulations.

A primary feature of the whole "recovery" programme has been the efforts to artificially stimulate a general rise in prices by credit and currency schemes, and by limiting price-cutting and controlling production through the codes. Because the crisis was accompanied by falling prices it has been assumed by almost all capitalists that if only prices could be pushed up "prosperity" would be here again. Yet it is evident that unless rising prices result from a growing demand for goods, the effect must be to curtail sales. This fact is recognised by the recovery administration. Roose-

velt and his economist advisers have, for perhaps the first time in the history of capitalist politics, insisted on the need for greater purchasing power amongst the masses if "prosperity" is to be regained and maintained. This attitude is partly, no doubt, a political manoeuvre to attract working class support. It is certainly emphatic enough, and none of the New Dealers have more clearly expressed it than H. A. Wallace, the present Secretary of Agriculture. In his pamphlet, "America Must Choose," reprinted in part in the *New York Times*, February 25th, 1934, he says:—

"There can be little doubt that the trouble traces, in whole or in part, to a maldistribution of income. That doctrine is implicit in our New Deal, which seems to me to rest on irresistible logic. We are trying to build up consumption per capita at home as a substitute for new consumers abroad. Our new method involves a planned redistribution of the national income, in contrast with the unplanned redistribution that takes place regularly, usually unhappily, in every major economic crisis the civilised world over. . . .

"Our New Deal seeks to promote consumption more soundly. It directs purchasing power to those in need by wage advances and alleviations of debt. It lessens the need to force exports. It looks toward balancing production with consumption at home."

In considering this aspect of the New Deal it is important to note that the schemes of the administration to raise wages have been timid in the extreme. Compare them with the bold experiments in banking control, crop reduction and business control through the codes. The fixing of minimum wage-rates affects only the lower-paid strata of workers, directly at all events. How higher-paid workers may be affected is well shown by A. Epstein, a writer on reform questions, in an article, "Is it a New Deal?" (*Current History*, March, 1934):—

"Under the new dispensation, many less efficient workers were completely cast out of industry. On the other hand, many of those who were formerly considered cheap and inefficient were discovered to be able to do almost as good work as that formerly done by employees who received more than the minimum wage in the codes.

"Since the codes did not abolish the employer's right to hire and fire, he was able either to dismiss entirely his most expensive help or to rehire them later at wages more nearly approaching the minimum. The endless possibilities in such reductions were quite unexplored. Even now there is no way of estimating whether or not the meagre accruals in purchasing power of the lowest-paid wage-earners exceed the reductions in the wages of higher-paid employees.

There is no conclusive evidence whatsoever that the N.R.A. . . . with its unwieldy mechanisms for enforcement, has actually resulted in increasing labour's total purchasing power. The contrary is more likely to be true."

Unorganised white-collar workers are especially liable to be affected in the above manner. L. W. Zimmer, in charge of the employment bureau of New York University, reported last October that "The \$20 to \$22 job is now about a \$15 job, because employers tend to keep their wages around the N.R.A. minimum." He added that the number found jobs was not appreciably above that of the same period of the preceding year. (*N.Y. Telegram*, October 11th, 1934.)

Despite the fact that one of the avowed objects of the N.R.A. is the abolition of "sweating," the minimum wage rates are only about one-half of the figure, \$26.77, which in 1932 was declared by the Department of Labour to be a bare subsistence wage for a family of five. It is well known, moreover, that great numbers are receiving less than the minimum. Fear of unemployment and victimisation effectively prevents complaints to the local N.R.A. Similar evasions in hours of labour are widespread.

The actual increase in individual earnings where there has been a growing demand for workers owing to increasing business has been very small. The American Federation of Labour in its annual review of industry for 1933 reports average weekly wage rates in 16 industries as being \$20.53 in November, 1932, \$20.56 in November, 1933, and \$20.83 at the end of January, 1934. Retail food prices, according to Bureau of Labour Statistics, had risen 20 per cent. between April, 1933, and February, 1934, whilst clothing and furnishings had risen 27 per cent. It is thus evident that the average worker's standard of living and purchasing power was actually declining during the first seven months of the N.R.A.

The attempt to absorb any large proportion of the unemployed by the reduction of hours to 35-40 weekly is futile so long as business continues at a low ebb. So great had been the spread of short time prior to the New Deal, that the average hours worked in June, 1933, were: crude petroleum industry, 42.6 hours; iron and steel, 37.9 hours; soft coal, 28.5. (*Monthly Labour Review*, August, 1933.) The average over all manufacturing industries for the first five months of 1933 is estimated at 34.7 hours.

It is, moreover, almost certain that with industrial recovery, machinery and speeding up will enable output at the code hours to equal or even surpass that reached with the longer hours of the pre-depression period. It is extremely significant that the makers of machinery are experiencing what is perhaps the sharpest pick-up shown in any industry. The *New York Times* (September



24th, 1933) reported that makers of machine tools did 400 per cent. more business in August than in the preceding March. This report further says: "The largest call for new equipment comes from textile mills, which are seeking high-speed machinery to replace the obsolete looms they find too expensive to operate under present high production costs. Producers of men's and women's garments are also investing freely in machinery capable of producing more goods in the limited working time allowed under the recovery codes."

Manufacturers of machinery attribute the present demand for labour-saving machinery to the desire of producers to keep up previous production schedules while remaining within the limits of the working hour provisions of the recovery programme. Could anything show more clearly the tangle of contradictions in which the N.R.A. is involved, how its provisions are nullified even when obeyed to the letter, by the inescapable trends of capitalist "enterprise"? It may be added that so great have been the advances in machinery and other means of production during the years of depression that students of the question agree in believing that with industry restored to its high 1929 level of output, 4,000,000 workers would remain unemployed. Only a further expansion of total production would reduce that figure.

Especially significant is the recent decision to close all of the 900 silk mills for one week on account of large unsold stocks. The textile code authorities have given this order, and violators are threatened with legal penalties. Hundreds of thousands of workers will be laid off.

During the first four months of the Roosevelt administration there was a swift improvement in business. This is generally attributed, in part at least, to the endeavour of manufacturers to lay up stocks before the rise in the costs of production which were expected to result from the Roosevelt policies. The *New York Times* index of business activity registered its lowest point, of 47.9, in March, 1933. (100 is the estimated "normal," but this, to-day, is arbitrary, and a return to it would still be under slump conditions.) The index rose rapidly, and momentarily touched 99 in mid-July, one month after N.R.A. was born. Then began a slow decline, reaching 72.5 in early November. Since then there has been a slow, wavering advance to 87.5 on May 5th. As there has been an improvement in business over most of the capitalist world in the past few months, it is doubtful, to say the least, to what extent the N.R.A. has been instrumental in assisting recovery in America.

There has been a moderate reduction in unemployment. The A.F. of L. report for May, 1934, states that unemployment was reduced from its peak of 13.6 millions in March, 1933, to 10.1 millions in October, but that between October, 1933,

and March, 1934, 780-thousand had lost their jobs again. Statistics on unemployment in the U.S. are, however, notoriously incomplete and unreliable. The A.F. of L. figures do not take into account agricultural and certain other classes of workers. The estimate of the Alexandra Hamilton Institute, which does take these into account, places the high point of unemployment at 17 millions. The A.F. of L. estimates that the total wages paid per week increased by 23.7 per cent. between March, 1933, and March, 1934.

Let us now look at the way in which the trend to recovery is affecting the capitalists. In the aforementioned A.F. of L. report it is stated that "the first fifty-one companies to report for the first quarter of 1934 showed total profits of \$18,740,000, compared with \$6,332,000 in 1933. Dividends, the Federation said, were \$15,000,000 higher in March, 1934, than in March, 1933." (*New York Times*, May 6th, 1934.) This tendency is precisely what one would expect. It is inevitable that, with the upward trend of production, the increase in returns on capital will be more rapid than the increase in income to the workers. Just as the slump in production was due to conditions which forced down the rate of profit, so the expansion of production can only result from conditions which cause the rate of profit to rise. Profit is the sole motive to production under capitalism, N.R.A. or no N.R.A.

It is evident, therefore, that the principle upon which the labour policy of the New Deal is in theory based, that a greater proportion of the national purchasing power must go to the workers, is not materialising, and it is not likely to.

Next month we will consider the N.R.A. and Trade Unionism.

R. W. H.

Workers' Socialist Party (U.S.A.)

## War and Socialism

**Do you know** why modern wars occur?

**Do you know** what is the Socialist attitude towards war?

**Do you know** why Socialists are not Pacifists?

**Do you know** that the S.P.G.B. was the only political organisation in Great Britain which proclaimed its Socialist opposition to the Great War immediately it broke out and kept to that attitude throughout the War?

**Do you know** what attitude you as a worker should take up towards war?

For answers to these and other questions read

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## Answers to Correspondents

### THE PAY OF PARTY OFFICIALS.

Several correspondents in recent months have asked what is the pay of the editors of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* and other Party Officials. The position is that, so far, the whole of the Party's work (apart from Head Office cleaning and caretaking), secretarial, editorial, organising, speaking, etc., has been done by volunteers, without any pay at all. As the Party's activities grow, it will cease to be possible to have certain kinds of work done by volunteers in their spare time, although the bulk of the work will always be done in this way. The fact that the S.P.G.B.'s financial resources are at present meagre has the effect of preventing us from undertaking those extensions of our activities which would necessitate having full-time organisers and other officials.

ED. COMM.

### THE QUALIFICATIONS OF "S.S." WRITERS.

Other correspondents have asked for information about the identity of the writers of articles published in the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, their qualifications to deal with certain subjects, and other similar information. The principal answer to all such inquiries is that the articles published in the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* carry their justification with them. They put forward certain arguments which the reader is expected to examine for himself, and to accept only if he finds them logical and in accordance with the facts. No attempt is made to secure the reader's agreement with a point of view merely on the ground that the writer is an "authority," although it is the claim of the S.P.G.B. that its declarations concerning Socialism, whether on the platform or in print, are the result of serious study, and are in that sense authoritative. For what it is worth we may point out that among the regular contributors to the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* are half a dozen writers who have university training and degrees. They are not, for that reason, any better exponents of the Socialist case than other writers who have not that kind of distinction. Having qualified in some special branch of study, they may be expected to be particularly fitted to deal with aspects of Socialism touching thereon, but in that they are no different from other writers and speakers of the Party who have specialised in various directions. In the S.P.G.B. every effort is made to secure accuracy as regards statements of fact, and to secure that all written and spoken statements of the Socialist case shall be in accordance with the teachings of science.

ED. COMM.

## NOTICES OF MEETINGS & LECTURES

All meetings are open to non-members, admission free, questions and discussions.

**BLOOMSBURY.** Meetings will be held at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street (Corner of Guildford Street), W.C.1, Friday evenings at 8.30 p.m., as follows:—1st June, "The Socialist Party and Dictatorship," N. Isbitsky; 8th June, "What is Wrong with the Trade Unions?" E. Hardy; 15th June, "Is Marx Out of Date?" A. Kohn; 22nd June, "Why Leadership Fails," Gilmac; 29th June "The Banking System," W. James.

**PADDINGTON.** Arrangements have been made with Paddington Branch to hold outdoor propaganda meetings as follows:—Wednesday, 8 p.m., "Prince of Wales," Harrow Road. Saturday, 8 p.m., Wendover Road (near Jubilee Clock), Harlesden. Sunday, 8 p.m., Queen's Road, Bayswater (near Whiteleys).

## OPEN AIR MEETINGS

LONDON DISTRICT.	
<b>Sunday</b> ...	Clapham Common, 3 p.m. Finsbury Park, 11.30 a.m. Queen's Road, Bayswater, 7 p.m. Brockwell Park, 6 p.m. Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m. Church Lane, Mitcham Road, S.W.17, 11.30 a.m. Cock Hotel, East Ham, 7.30 p.m. West Green Corner, Tottenham, 8 p.m. Liverpool Street, Walworth (Camberwell Gate), 11 a.m. Romford Market Place, 8 p.m. (1st Sunday in month only). Kings Hall Pic. Palace, Bakers Arms, Leyton, at 12 o'clock.
<b>Monday</b> ...	Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8., 8 p.m. Highbury Corner, N., 8 p.m.
<b>Wednesday</b> ...	West Green Corner, Tottenham, 8 p.m. Windsor Road, Forest Gate, 8 p.m. "Prince of Wales," Harrow Road, 8 p.m. Clock Tower, Avenue Road, Lewisham, 8 p.m.
<b>Thursday</b> ...	Ridley Road, Dalston, 8 p.m. "Salmon and Ball," Bethnal Green, 8 p.m.
<b>Friday</b> ...	Ilford Station, 8 p.m.
<b>Saturday</b> ...	Rushcroft Road, Brixton (opp. Lambeth Town Hall), 7.30 p.m. Wendover Road, Jubilee Clock, Harlesden, 7.30 p.m. Jolly Butcher's Hill, Wood Green, 8 p.m.
SHEFFIELD.	
<b>Sundays</b> ...	Barker's Pool, 7.30 p.m.

## Hammersmith

A new branch is being formed in this district. Will members and sympathisers living in the district apply to:—H. G. Holt, 6, Danethorpe Road, Wembley, or to J. White, 135, Manor Grove, Richmond.

## Trade Union Branches

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## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JUNE,



1934

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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## The Disintegration of the I.L.P.

### Another New Party Formed.

Less than two years ago the I.L.P. decided to leave the Labour Party, which it had spent thirty years trying to build up and control. A large minority declined to accept this decision, formed the Socialist League and the Scottish Socialist Party, and remained in the Labour Party. Now, after a painful experience of trying to work with the Communist Party without being swallowed up by it, the I.L.P. has seen another large section of its membership secede in order to form yet another organisation, the Independent Socialist Party.

The secessionists are the I.L.P. branches in Lancashire and neighbouring counties, and their reason for seceding is that they object to the policy adopted by the majority of forming a united front with the Communist Party. They also protest that the policy of the Maxton group is leaning away from democratic and parliamentary methods towards minority action and armed revolt, that is, towards the discredited doctrines of the Communists.

The resolution passed at the inaugurating conference was as follows (*Manchester Guardian*, May 14th):—

That this conference, believing that poverty, unemployment, war, and restriction of liberty are the inevitable accompaniment of capitalism, declares for the establishment of a Socialist Commonwealth in which the land, and instruments of production, and exchange are publicly owned and democratically controlled and in which economic equality will obtain. Understanding that the change from capitalism to Socialism involves a revolution, the conference affirms

that this can only be accomplished by the enlightened democratic assent of the majority of the people and by the full use of the political, industrial, and co-operative strength possessed by the British democracy. To this end it pledges itself to establish an independent Socialist Party which will present not merely "collectivism" as an economic necessity, but Socialism as an ethically superior social system.

This resolution can be taken as giving a good idea of the outlook of the new movement. It is perhaps an advance on the series of programmes adopted in the past by the I.L.P., but it contains many confused and ambiguous phrases, dangerous not only for what they say, but also for the certainty that they will be differently interpreted by different people. What, for example, is meant by public ownership and democratic control of the "instruments of exchange"? Exchange is the process of buying and selling, of giving one privately-owned commodity in exchange for another. It can have no place in a Socialist system of society where articles will be produced for use, not for sale. It may be, of course, that the framers of the resolution did not mean "exchange" but "distribution," but that only indicates their unfitness yet to propagate Socialism. And why the term "publicly owned"? This is the conveniently obscure name used by Mr. Herbert Morrison to describe the form of capitalism which goes by the name public utility corporations. What is meant by "political, industrial, and co-operative strength"? There can be no Socialism until a Socialist majority have organised politically for and have achieved the conquest of the machinery of government. To link up industrial action with this as if the two were of equal importance shows confusion. The reference to "co-operative strength" is worse, for it implies that the new party has inherited the I.L.P. belief, that the joint stock capitalist trading, known as the Co-operative Movement, is an organisation which exists to help achieve Socialism.

One test that can be applied to this new party concerns the S.P.G.B. On the surface they have come a considerable way towards recognising the soundness of the S.P.G.B.'s position, and prominent members, such as Mr. Middleton Murry, have on occasions admitted this. If, then, they are clear and determined in their belief that Socialism is the only solution, and that independent democratic political action is the method, why did they hasten to form yet another party, instead of joining the S.P.G.B.?

If, on the other hand, they hold that the S.P.G.B.'s position is unsound, why do they not state their case against it? They have not done so, but—and this includes Mr. Middleton Murry in particular—they have carefully avoided dealing with the S.P.G.B. at all.

That the founders of the new party are completely muddled in their conception of what constitutes political independence is, however, shown

by their statement (*Manchester Guardian*, May 17th) that members of the I.S.P. are to be allowed to be members of the Labour Party as well. If the basis of the new party is really different from that of the Labour Party, as is claimed, how can individuals be permitted to belong to both parties? The fact that this is to be permitted will be interpreted, and rightly so, as an indication that the I.S.P. stands in the same kind of relationship to the Labour Party as did the old I.L.P., that of a reformist group calling for a more "militant," but not essentially different, policy and objective. It will also open up the way to that bugbear of working class organisations, the political careerist, who will be able in the I.S.P., as in the former I.L.P., to run with the "left wing" hare while hunting with the Labour Party hounds.

So far there has been no talk in the new party of putting forward a programme of reforms or immediate demands, but since they acknowledge their faith in the old traditions of the I.L.P., and are willing to allow membership of the Labour Party, it is to be expected that they will go the same way as all the other parties which have wanted Socialism a little, but have wanted a large membership, and parliamentary and local government electoral victories, more than they wanted Socialism.

In passing, it is worth recording the result of the Upton by-election, at which Mr. Fenner Brockway was the I.L.P. candidate. The I.L.P. (that is, the Maxton-Brockway fragment of the once popular and wealthy party) is now near-Communist, and it put

forward Mr. Brockway in order to queer the pitch of the Labour Party candidate. The result was that the Labour candidate obtained 11,998 votes, the Conservative 8,534, and Mr. Brockway only

748, thus forfeiting his £150 deposit. The I.L.P. (and the Communists, who supported them in the election) sought comfort in the view that, at any rate, they had got real revolutionary votes. A glance at Mr. Brockway's election address shows, however, that he solicited votes on the usual reform measures. In his programme were the following: Old-age pensions of 20s. at sixty years of age, thirty hours' work a week, all-round increases of wages "to a decent human standard," restoration of the wage cuts on the pay of postmen, teachers, soldiers, sailors and the police, etc., etc. One little thing shows the shoddiness of this reformist vote-catching. Mr. Brockway now asks for old-age pensions at sixty; forty years ago the I.L.P. was asking for old-age pensions at fifty. Is this what is meant by a more "advanced" programme?

This kind of reformism once gave the I.L.P. a 60,000 membership, and 200 of its members seats in the House of Commons as Labour M.P.'s. Now its membership is probably less than a tenth of that number, and its M.P.'s are reduced to two or three. When the Maxtons and Brockways are finally forced to recognise that the tide of reformist votes is flow-

ing strongly towards the Labour Party, it may be expected that they and their shattered remnant of followers will slink back into that safe harbourage.

Their experiment in reformism, independent of

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocracy and plutocracy.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



the Labour Party, has been every whit as harmful to the Socialist movement as their years of working hand-in-hand with the Liberal and Labour Parties.

It remains to be seen whether the Independent Socialist Party has really learned by that experience or whether it, too, will gravitate back to the magnet of trade union votes and trade union money inside the Labour Party. There is no place for a really independent working class party except on the basis of clear-cut Socialist principles from which every vestige of reformism and vote-catching have been excluded.

## The Purpose of Socialist Organisation

The reason for organisation is that a number of people united are better able to accomplish a given end as a rule than the same people working in an isolated fashion. In fact, some ends can only be accomplished by means of organisations, and Socialism is one of them.

Mere organisation, however, is not enough. It must be of such a nature that it will meet the need to accomplish the end as soon as possible. Moreover, it must really accomplish the end, and not some pale shadow of it.

Bad organisation will often defeat the end aimed at, weak organisation will hinder its accomplishment, and only sound organisation will adequately achieve it.

The end that is aimed at determines the nature of the organisation. Organisation for Socialism is a political movement to revolutionise present social arrangements which rest on the private ownership of the means for producing and distributing the social wealth.

As the political arrangements of the world are split into separate political units with clearly-defined national boundaries, the world organisation for Socialism must also be split up into similar national groups struggling to obtain control of the national centre of political power, but is in close touch with their counterparts in other national groups. The business of each, however, is first of all to settle accounts with their immediate political adversaries.

Political parties are those which participate in the struggle for control of the State machinery. The Socialist party is therefore a political party.

In order to achieve its aim the party organised to obtain Socialism must be clear as to its object and its policy; work in harmony with existing conditions, which set definite limits to what can be done, and draw its strength from the working class,—all who live by the sale of their energy to the employing class.

The object of the Socialist Party is set out on another page. An examination of it will show

that it is a definite, practical object,—and is not concerned with any abstract ideas of humanity, justice, liberty, and so forth. It implies a fundamental social revolution—a revolution in the method of ownership. It further implies that the majority of the people shall take part in the change, for it sets out that in the future system there shall be democratic control. For this to be a reality the majority of the people must understand what they are about, else there would be no control, but simply a gigantic muddle. Hence there can be no question of Socialism stealing in by the back door, as it were. It must be clearly and openly explained and examined, so that all may grasp its meaning.

Once this revolutionary nature of Socialism is thoroughly grasped, time will not be wasted devising means that at best only ease, without removing, some of the worst evils of the present system. There is one example that illustrates very well how an immense amount of energy can be spent on a reform that has no important influence on the position of the mass of the people. For generations the workers were persuaded to interest themselves in the question of Irish Home Rule, and even general elections were fought ostensibly on that question. Well, Ireland—or anyhow, the voluble part of it—now have home rule, but no one appears to have discovered any particular change in the condition of the workers inside or outside of Ireland, as a result of it. A similar thing can be said of most of the issues that come up for judgment under the heading of reforms.

The disillusion and apathy that are the offspring of disappointment when reforms have been obtained but fail to produce any lasting remedy is another objection to reform policies. One can imagine the feelings of those who spent a lifetime working for Irish Home Rule, and now see its accomplishment. They have not even the satisfaction of having achieved the end they were after, because the actual end is something far different from what they pictured it to be.

Again, there is the enormous waste of time arguing about the values of particular reforms and the splits and enmities developed out of these discussions. This point need hardly be laboured, as most of those who are politically active are only too bitterly aware of it.

For the above reasons, and many more, but above all because reform can only, at best, mitigate, but cannot abolish the evils that flow from the present organisation of society, the policy of the Socialist Party is revolutionary and not reformist.

It has been mentioned that the party aiming at Socialism must work in harmony with existing conditions. It must be recognised that Socialism is a growth out of Capitalism, and not a brand new, watertight system that has been carefully thought out and can be produced like the conjurer

produces a cat from an empty bag. The very idea of such a system as Socialism has only developed because of modern social trends. The organisation of industry on a large scale makes production to meet the needs of all a relatively simple matter; this production is obtained by the application of human labour to Nature-given material, and it is the workers alone who apply the labour; the wealth produced is owned by those who own the means of production but who, on the whole, take no part in production. Facts like these are bringing home to more and more workers the knowledge that by converting the means of production into the common property of all, and thus producing for the benefit of all, instead of a privileged few, it would be possible for all to live in comfort, and hence is a very desirable change.

To make this change, however, it is necessary to observe that the State power is the bulwark that supports the present system, and that there are certain prescribed methods by which control of this State power can be attained, failure to observe which only leads to disaster. Many clever and honest people who believed that the parliamentary avenue to State control could be ignored threw up all struggle in despair at the ends of their lives. Sorel, Labriola and Michel are examples of those who held to the view that strikes and street fights were the means the workers should adopt to overthrow the present social system, but in the end they became despondent. Others, like Briand, who held similar views, ultimately went over to the side of the Capitalists.

It is from the workers that the Socialist Party draws its strength, because it is the workers whose interests demand the change. The Capitalists, as a whole, live in comfort, on account of their privileged position, consequently it would be both absurd and useless to expect them to voluntarily give up their privileges. Speaking in general, it is to the Capitalist's interest to retain the present system of exploitation, because they are the gainers from it, and it is to the interest of the workers to abolish the system, because it enslaves them and shuts them out from a life of comfort and security.

Hence the Socialist Party addresses its appeal for members to the working class, and draws its funds and its workers from members of the working class. For reasons already mentioned, it is essential that those who join the Socialist Party should clearly understand its object and policy, and hence the need for an object and set of principles making this clear, so that those who join will know exactly where they are.

There is one thing, however, which is not written in the Declaration of Principles, but is also necessary for obtaining Socialism, that is, members to do the work that is involved in organisation for such a purpose. Here we would

appeal to sympathisers who agree with us but have not yet seen fit to join.

The more there are to do the various necessary jobs, the less burdensome the jobs become, and the more efficiently they can be done. We need speakers and writers to spread our message; people who can do clerical work, literature selling, and the hosts of other jobs that must be done.

Above all, those who come into the Socialist Party will have the unique advantage of helping to support the organisation for which they are working. Their remuneration will be their satisfaction as one of the instruments in the great social transformation that is coming, which will lift them out of bondage.

GILMAC.

## Canada's White Hope—the C.C.F.

Ever since Jack Johnson won the heavyweight championship many moons ago, the world has with eagerness watched the coming and going of white hopes. In the more important realm of politics new movements are born and quickly die, the remains creating fertilizers for new hopes to befog the minds of the majority, who so far have shown no desire for a real change in the system.

It is two years since the birth of the C.C.F. in Calgary, and British workers may be interested to know what the mystic letters "C.C.F." mean, and what the organisation stands for.

The Canadian Co-operative Federation is the fine-sounding title represented by the letters in question, and to those of us who have had the Co-operative Commonwealth, i.e., Socialism, as our objective for years it is difficult to understand the minds which claim that their ultimate aim, but spend all their time advocating something else now.

The outstanding figure of the C.C.F. is James S. Woodsworth, one of the Winnipeg Labour M.P.'s in the Parliament at Ottawa. He is an preacher noted for his radical ideas, and has turned out an able politician, judged by the standards of the capitalist parties.

In the 1921 election to the Federal House, sixty-four Progressives were elected, all with more or less Radical ideas. By 1925 most of them were absorbed by the Liberal Party, and in 1930 (including the Labourites) they only mustered fifteen members, who have since that time co-operated in a loose group.

August 1st, 1932, saw the first meeting and the first attempt at organisation, when a Farmer-Labour Federation was formed. This meeting was attended by delegates of Labour Parties of the four Western Provinces and the organised farmers of Alberta and Saskatchewan.



The movement spread rapidly and culminated in a great Convention, held in Regina, July 19th to 21st, 1933. It was attended by 135 delegates, from Toronto and Montreal in the East to Vancouver on the Pacific Coast, at which the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation was founded.

The affiliations of the Federation consist of the Farmer-Labour Party of New Brunswick, the Labour Party of Quebec, the Labour Conference of Ontario, the I.L.P. of Manitoba, the Labour Party of Saskatchewan, the Canadian Labour Party of Alberta, and the so-called Socialist Party of British Columbia. Next, and perhaps most important, the organised Farmers of Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta joined up, with Manitoba farmers giving half-hearted support, but likely to continue to vote for the Farmer-Liberal Government which has power in this Province at present.

Another group giving support to the C.C.F. consists of a sprinkling of "intellectuals" of the Radical type, mostly college professors, doctors, lawyers and preachers. In addition, the organised Protestant churches have practically blessed the C.C.F. by passing resolutions calling for the "transformation of the present competitive system into a co-operative one." C.C.F. leaders frequently quote from a recent encyclical of Pope Pius in an effort to link up the powerful Roman Catholic vote to their side.

The semi-feudal background of the peasants and workers of Roman Catholic Quebec will be hard to overcome, and radicalism of the pinkest type has not yet penetrated to that home of what has been termed bush-culture. To illustrate the outlook of some of the farming element of Canada to which the C.C.F. appeals, it has been related that a C.C.F. speaker, after declaiming against the Wages system, had one farmer agree with him in the following words: "Yes, I agree we should abolish wages. Hired men want far too big wages nowadays."

The economic background of the new movement, therefore, is made up of, first, a very reactionary farm population whose main desire is a big price for farm produce. On the other hand, they demand a low wage scale for labour, not only amongst their hired hands, but also amongst the men who make their farm machinery, and those who on the railroads, etc., transport their produce to the markets of the world.

Secondly, a Labour movement with the regular Trade Union outlook largely imported from Great Britain but contaminated by the ideas of that most pitiful Trade Union movement, the American Federation of Labour, to which most of our unions are affiliated.

There are also groups organised as Social Reconstruction Clubs which are affiliated to the C.C.F., and from the leaders of those clubs flow a

constant stream of half-boiled schemes and plans, and a constant fight against anything pertaining to a recognition of the class struggle.

The usual Left and Right Wings are already developing. The reformist S.P. of British Columbia is led largely by some ex-members of the old S.P. of Canada, who could see no possible career in the new Party organised in Winnipeg a few years ago with a programme similar to that of the S.P.G.B. They, along with some young members of the I.L.P. in Winnipeg and a small group of ex-semi-Communists in Toronto, comprise the Left.

The Farmers of Ontario are led by an avowed anti-Socialist, Miss Agnes McPhail, M.P. She has the help of two other fierce opponents of Socialism, in the persons of Mr. Elmore Philpott, much boosted soldier-orator-journalist in Toronto, and Mr. John McLean, M.A., B.A., L.L.D. (Oxon.), Rhodes scholar and lawyer here in Winnipeg.

We see then that the new Federation represents (a) the wage workers of Canada, whose ideas are as nebulous as the ideas of the same class in other lands, and of course it can well be understood their immediate demands are equally confusing; (b) the farmers of Canada, whose hopes and demands have already been outlined as high prices for farm produce and low wages for the industrial workers as well as the farm labourers.

The C.C.F. have fourteen planks in their platform, subject, of course, to additions and reductions to suit the vote-catching needs of the moment. Some of the planks appeal specially to the wage workers. Plank 7, for instance, calls for "A National Labour Code to secure for the workers maximum income and leisure, insurance covering illness, accident, old age and unemployment, freedom of association and an effective participation in the management of his industry or profession."

Mr. Elmer E. Roper, one of the Alberta Labour leaders, tells us, in the February issue of the *Saskatchewan C.C.F. Research*, that this plank is one that might easily appear in the Election platform of either of the old parties.

The same could well be said of the other thirteen planks, but we will deal with them as we go on.

Plank 4 deals with "Agriculture" and features as its chief aim "Security of Tenure" for the farmers of Canada. To get what is meant by that elusive term we can refer to the C.C.F. Agricultural Policy as outlined by their principal farmer leader, G. H. Williams, President of the Saskatchewan Farmer-Labour group, in his speech at the Regina Convention, July 22nd, 1933. The present real owners of Canadian Farm lands—the Mortgage and Insurance Companies—are to be treated real rough by Mr. Williams and the C.C.F. when they get power. He says: "We will give you bonds for your equity, bonds that will not

carry interest. . . . These bonds will be payable over a period of years in the currency of the province as it may be at the date of payment." Then to the farmer, Mr. Williams says: "All improvements will, of course, increase the value of the land, and the State will guarantee to compensate you for the increase in the value of the land, brought about by your efforts." Not only that, but Mr. Williams says they are going to supply "through Socialism to the agriculturist, a marketing board, State credit and pegged prices. . . . In industry we guarantee to the worker a job at an adequate wage and we use the production for the benefit of the Canadian people. We will do the same for agriculture."

So that brings us to a new problem for the C.C.F. What will people use for money? Planks 2, 11 and 14 deal with this absorbing question. Mr. C. G. Coote, M.P., one of their money experts, tells us, in the House of Commons on February 1st, 1933: "The first step is a planned economy," and the next: "A central bank owned by the State, whose duty it would be to see that sufficient money is at all times available to allow us to distribute among our people the consumable goods which we can produce."

That, in part, is what the C.C.F. have copied from that enemy of Socialism, Major Douglas. Let us again quote from the organ of the "Saskatchewan C.C.F. Research Bureau," December, 1933, issue, where we read: "The only shortage is in money, and this artificial shortage is due to the policy of the financiers and is maintained by the powers of the State. The State will then make every man, woman and child an equal partner in the wealth of the country as a going concern. Backed by the inexhaustible resources of the nation the State can issue as much credit as is needed." Later we read: "There is no shortage of anything, except money, wherewith to purchase the things we produce, and a sane system of finance is all that is required to make these things available. Sufficient purchasing power for everybody is merely a matter of accounting."

Here we have revealed the C.C.F. answer to Socialism. Socialism involves that goods shall be produced for use and not for sale. The C.C.F. say goods will be produced for sale, but that they will provide the people with money to purchase them, an impossible attempt to keep capitalism but escape the consequences of so doing.

The depression of the Seventies produced on this Continent the American Grange or the Patrons of Industry, the Nineties had their Populist Movement, and later we had Townley and his Non-Partisans, and in Canada the depression of the early Twenties produced the Progressives.

The Farmer Movement of Canada has its roots in those old discredited movements, with the same kind of currency cranks leading them, and the

British Columbia "Socialists" and Winnipeg I.L.P.'ers trailing behind. Reactionary farmers representing the dog, and confused workers the tail. Why should the gods not laugh?

Plank 1 calls for "Planning," as if capitalism was not planned beautifully for the capitalists!

Plank 3, on Social Ownership, reassures the most reactionary that confiscation is unthought of. It says: "We do not propose to adopt any policy of outright confiscation," and again: "We recognise the need for compensation."

Plank 5 calls for "Import and Export Boards" to deal with foreign trade.

Planks 8, 9 and 10 deal respectively with "Health Service," "The British North America Act," which governs the Canadian Constitution, and "External Relations." Then 12 and 13, dealing with "Freedom" and "Social Justice" bring to a close a programme which is a mixture of decadent Liberalism, Fabian Bureaucracy and Currency Confusion.

Practically every plank and clause is a denial of the purpose of the Federation, which is supposed to be: "The establishment of a Co-operative Commonwealth, in which the basic principle regulating production, etc., will be the supplying of human needs and not the making of profits."

The attitude of the Socialist Party of Canada towards this Federation is one of unbending opposition. We are opposed to the spurious "Socialism" advocated by their spokesmen and leaders, the Socialism that "recognises the need for compensation," or a Socialism which is going to issue money "to purchase the things we produce," or one that guarantees to the worker "a job at an adequate wage." We do not want a "Co-operative Commonwealth" like the one envisaged by Professor Frank H. Underhill, the head of the Brazil Trust, when he says in his essay on Dictatorship: "The direct ownership and operation by government of the great strategic services, such as transportation and distribution of electric power." We don't even want our planning done by "public officials."

No! we are opposed to bureaucracy, to a wage system, to compensation, and not only to Government ownership but to the coercive State itself. When all the people own all the earth and the means whereby wealth is produced, classes will automatically disappear, and if society has no owning and governing class, how can we have a Government, the function of which is to protect class ownership? The kind of administrative organisation then required will be essentially different.

To the young and earnest workers in the Federation we constantly repeat the old truth, that non-Socialists organised on a programme of reforms cannot further the work for Socialism. The changing economic conditions are working for us, disillusion will follow the futile efforts of Wordsworth, Pritchard and Queen to make a coherent



movement out of such widely divergent elements as constitute the C.C.F. Some of their leaders will openly join the avowedly capitalist parties, but there will be no place for any of them in the Socialist movement, which has no use for Leaders, any more than it has for the other evil features of a system so detrimental to human welfare as modern capitalism.

A. P.

## Socialism, the King and the House of Lords

A correspondent asks the following questions:—

Will you please define the S.P.G.B.'s attitude towards the question of Royalty and Republicanism under a Socialist State? Also how would the S.P.G.B. deal with the House of Lords?

Reply.

Whatever part the institution of kingship has played in the past history of the human race and whatever part it now plays under the social system known as capitalism, neither monarchism nor republicanism will be issues under Socialism. The original functions of kingship have already long been lost and are only saved from oblivion because the memory of them is preserved in certain ancient names, ceremonials and pale imitations. Nowadays, although King George V of England and Emperor William II of Germany, and Emperor Nicholas of Russia and the President of the French Republic, went forth to the seat of war in 1914, nobody seriously believed that they were there to lead or to direct the huge fighting forces of the capitalist State. It was just a piece of make-believe, but a highly important piece. Capitalism, both in war and in peace, under a monarchy and under a republic, inevitably produces a never-ending conflict between the classes—the owning class and the property-less class—and between sections of the same class. It is therefore essential that the capitalist class shall be able to cover up the yawning gulf between these antagonistic classes by throwing over it the cloak of national unity. This is one of the principal functions of the Church, and, above all, of the monarchy, or the Republican President. Surrounding the King or the President, the capitalists carefully build up a structure of ceremonies, hallowed by tradition, glorified by a lavish display of riches, and sanctified by the Church and the capitalist political parties.

Take away the class antagonisms by taking away the private ownership of the means of life and then the monarchist or republican edifice will be unnecessary. The members of society will be bound together by the tie of mutual interest. They will no longer have to be forced into a mockery of unity by the gloved hand covering the mailed fist.

It will be seen that the attitude of the Socialist is not at all that of the republican. The S.P.G.B. would not support capitalist republicans in an attempt to overthrow monarchy any more than it would help to defend the monarchy against republicanism. When, three years ago, the Spanish monarchy was overthrown, the reformist parties in Spain, as in England (the I.L.P., for example), were overjoyed at what they supposed was the inauguration of a new and better system of society. The S.P.G.B. declined to participate in the celebrations, for we know that it is immaterial to the working class whether they live under a capitalist monarchy or a capitalist republic.

The House of Lords presents no serious problem. When there is a majority of Socialists, politically organised for the purpose of achieving Socialism, the House of Lords will not be permitted to stand in the way. It, like the trappings of monarchy or republic, will have no function to perform under Socialism. It will end when capitalism ends.

The idea that the House of Lords will prove a final bulwark of capitalism is based on illusion. When the capitalists can no longer obtain a majority for their candidates at Parliamentary elections they will know that an unrepresentative body like the House of Lords will not be able to help them. It will prove a broken reed, if ever there was one.

ED. COMM.

## Too Old at Twenty-Nine

At the season of annual conferences, it is the custom for the president or chairman to include in his remarks some apparently startling phrase, which is duly headlined in the next morning's papers.

Recently Sir Thomas Oliver delivered his presidential address at the Institute of Hygiene, and his particular little tit-bit was: "I do not believe in the too-old-at-forty theory," and he added that there were more men now between 60 and 70 in good health and fit for work, if social, industrial, and trade union conditions allowed it, than there were 200 years ago.

It is a tribute to Sir Thomas's perspicacity that he added the rider: "if social, industrial, and trade union conditions allowed it."

Sir Thomas, however, did not stop to examine why it was that the economic conditions did not permit such a state of affairs. Whilst his views on medical matters may be worthy of attention, it would not do for him to enter into the realm of economics. A too close study of this subject, particularly if he gave expression to the views which would undoubtedly follow such a study on the right lines, might result in his losing some of his best customers.

However, to get back to the "too-old-at-forty" business; Sir Thomas says that he does not believe in this theory. The implication is that there is such a theory, but if so, it would be interesting to know who it was who first enunciated it, and whether anybody would actually advance such a theory, even at the present time. Sir Thomas appears to have been indulging in the familiar practice of knocking down his own Aunt Sallies. Nobody would dispute that there are men over forty capable of doing both hard and useful work.

It is, however, the fact that in industry to-day, the employing class do not merely draw the line at forty, but even at thirty or less. Witness this:—

"Shorthand-typists, typists, clerks, telephone operators, and juniors (girls and boys), and all office staff of good appearance, secondary education, and not over 28, invited to register at Birch's Agency, 1, Gt. Winchester Street, E.C.2."

The advertisers, and the capitalist class generally, are not actuated by any mere theory that a man is too old at either twenty-nine or forty. They know that there is a large surplus of labour available, and they merely take advantage of the fact to get as young, strong, and cheap workers as possible. They frequently prefer women and girls as being cheaper than men. No blame attaches to them for this, and we would not waste our breath telling them to employ older people. The conditions of the existing form of society are such that in order to produce most profitably, the capitalists get the most efficient labour at the cheapest price.

However, there is not merely the fact that men over a certain age find it practically impossible to get jobs; there is the fact that these men are forced to live upon a semi-starvation diet whilst they can walk down the street and see Rolls-Royces careering past; they can look in at shop windows displaying all manner of luxurious edibles; they can go in the free library and read in *The Sketch* how their betters are enjoying themselves; and, casting their eyes heavenwards, they can see the boss class rushing about in space. They know, further, that in the midst of a superabundance of cotton, wheat, coffee, milk, butter and cheese, strenuous efforts are being made to cut down the production of these things.

These features are commonplaces of present-day society, and will remain so long as the basis of that system, namely, the private ownership of the means of production, continues. If the workers do not like the effects of this system upon themselves, it is up to them to change it to one which is based upon the common ownership of the means of production, i.e., Socialism.

To return to Sir Thomas, however, there is one real germ of thought which deserves to be rescued from the obscurity of a daily newspaper.

He says:—

"To age gracefully, there must be a happy and contented mind, and, while the possession of wealth alone will not bring these, it is a consolation if there is a sufficient financial competency to meet the physical needs of the body with a little surplus left to help others not so well off. For if we would ourselves be happy, we must give happiness to others."

In other words, in order that one lot of people may be happy, it is necessary that another lot shall lack a "sufficient financial competency." The first lot can then get a mental and psychical uplift by assisting the other lot. This other lot, apparently, will not be able to achieve "happiness," but that is not of much moment, so long as the first lot are all right!

RAMO.

## Snapshots

THE "SENTIMENTAL" *CLARINETTE*.

For several years "before the War" there was a paper called the *Clarion*. There still is. There is a contrast, however, in its present tone, which expresses the degeneracy of the Labour movement, with which it is associated.

The old *Clarion* sent forth a shrill and challenging blast. Its economics were decidedly "wonky" and its excursions into philosophy were somewhat crude, but compare "Britain for the British," or "God and my Neighbour," with the near-deathbed confessions of J. C. Lansbury, commencing in its issue of April 14th. "The foundation of all true reform or revolutionary change must start with this 'that ye love one another,'" says old George; and, confronted with the question, "How am I to do it, placed as I am in the midst of a world of strife?" continues: "This is our problem, and it can only really be solved by us all individually."

"Ker-ist!" and one is asked to pay twopence a week to listen to the apologetic squeak of this tin-trumpet! "Odham's—bodikins!"

THE "INTELLECTUAL" CONSPIRATORS.

A document has fallen into our hands contrary to the wishes of its authors. It is labelled "Forward to Socialism" and is issued by the National Council of the Socialist League for discussion at that body's forthcoming Annual Conference (May 20th and 21st), and at the foot of the title-page occurs this tit-bit:—

"Members and branches are requested by the National Council of the League to take the greatest care to secure that the contents of this document are not divulged in whole or in part to other than League members."

Needless to say, the proverbial wild horses shall not drag from the writer the secret of how he came



into possession of this precious document with its solemnly futile attempt at secrecy. Let us glance at its pages. About halfway through we encountered the phrase, "We must have Socialism!" in capital letters, repeated seven times. It is, of course, common knowledge that seven is a number of mystic potency, but this hardly explains the jargon which occurs after each repetition of the phrase. One of the alleged reasons for having Socialism is "that society as a whole shall be responsible for the health, well-being and education of its people." Does not capitalist society pull down slums and build banks and departmental stores? Does it not provide us with a water supply and drains, hospitals and convalescent homes, and free education for all? And are not these things done in order to facilitate the working of a system for the production of profit?

This little spasm ends with a reference to "all those financial institutions necessary for the maintenance of a highly-organised industrial life." This reads somewhat like an auctioneer's advertisement, but we are left guessing what necessary function financial institutions will fulfil under Socialism.

On the same page, our dear old friend, the House of Lords, is severely dealt with, and we are assured, in italics, that "the will of the people must prevail." Shades of 1910! Play me those "Limehouse Blues"!

These Socialist Leaguers are hot-stuff. The final agenda (which descended from heaven along with the document) contains a resolution on Policy in the name of three branches, one clause of which (15) demands "Compensation of the existing owners of socialised industries or compulsorily closed units by the issue of State fixed-interest bearing bonds, based on the assessed capital value of their holdings." There are several amendments to this, all of which safeguard the interests of "the present holders."

All of which goes to show what practical people these chaps are. No foolish upsetting of the existing capitalists and their dependants for them.

E. B.

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# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

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*Socialism is a  
new system of  
Society, not a  
change of . .  
rulers. . . .  
Administration  
of Capitalism  
by a Labour .  
Government is  
not Socialism.*

## The Reaction in Europe and the S.P.G.B.

Observers of political events since 1918 cannot fail to have noticed the change that has come over the general tone and attitude of the various so-called "left" elements among the workers. For the first few years after the war these elements were jubilantly proclaiming the imminence of the end of the present social order upon the strength of a few beggarly political and other reforms on the Continent. Because sections of the ruling-class lost their grip of things in the defeated countries (giving way to others who were prepared to provide safety-valves for working class discontent and place certain belated limits on their exploitation) we were asked to believe that our masters were at the end of their tether and would be surrendering the earth in a few short years.

Now we are asked to believe a very different story by these self-same elements. In their eyes now there are no limits to the powers of the master-class to impose what is commonly termed Fascism and to interfere with the general development of the working-class. Why? Because, forsooth, these re-

forms are being filched from the workers within a few years of being won. To crown all, instead of realising the futility of reform policies, these elements proclaim ever more loudly the need for still bigger and better reforms.

What is the attitude of the S.P.G.B. towards this change of front on the part of such bodies as the Communist Party and I.L.P.? Briefly, it is to maintain unchanged our hostility to these bodies and to demonstrate that the capitalist system remains essentially unchanged, in spite of the manifold forms assumed by the different national States which uphold it.

Having had experience of partial suppression during the War, we are far from holding that it is a matter of indifference to the workers whether they are allowed political expression or not. The Socialist movement, which is the supreme expression of their needs, cannot arrive at maturity under conditions of political reaction. In Engel's phrase, the Socialist movement needs elbow-room.

Experience shows, however, that reform organisations, no matter how numerous their members and supporters may be, cannot guarantee to the workers these essential political conditions of development. So far from their being able to check reaction their inability when they become the Government to solve the economic problem, has provided reaction with its greatest political stimulus. Helpless before the economic blizzard, they are equally helpless in the face of its political reflexion.

The progress of scientific organisation under capitalism results in the weeding out of the smaller capitalists and, as a result, anti-scientific notions, such as Fascism, readily find acceptance among

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such groups during a period of economic depression.

Socialism alone can free the productive forces from restrictions imposed upon them by different sections of the capitalist class. In the meantime, these sections strive each to impose the amount and kind of restriction suited to its own interest. The small capitalists, faced with impending bankruptcy, strive to hamper the large-scale concerns, but neither Hitler nor Mussolini has discovered how to save these obsolete little "captains of industry." The big fish continue to swallow up the little fish.

Every national State, no matter how it may describe itself, endeavours to utilise science to the maximum degree in perfecting its instruments of aggression and defence. Hence, for this reason, if for no other, it encourages the development of large-scale industry, which alone can provide these instruments. This applies equally to Bolshevik Russia, Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany—and to Britain, whether under "Labour" or "National" Governments. Large-scale industry progresses, in its turn, upon the ruins of small-scale industry.

This results in the development of the working-class, i.e., in the increase of its numbers, and in the growth of its organisation upon the industrial field. The intensity and scope of the class-struggle increase simultaneously.

The "dictators," Fascist and Bolshevik alike, attempt to repress this struggle by suppressing all political parties save one. The result is that discontented elements find their way into the one legal party, and are a constant menace to its unity. The "Dictator" preserves his authority over the different factions among his followers by avoiding going too far in any one direction. Hitler and Mussolini, Stalin and Pilsudski owe their positions to compromise just as surely as does Ramsay MacDonald, or any other Parliamentary politician.

In Britain, however, the capitalist class has long ago learned how to sink its internal struggles in critical moments, as a result of its more advanced economic development. It finds its solution, not in dictatorships, but in Coalitions or "National" Governments. The essential compromise is achieved by less violent means.

Under such conditions Fascists, so-called, are as little likely as Communists to become anything more than a thorn in the side of some larger party. Just as the Communists imported Russian jargon, but were utterly unable to bring over Russian conditions along with it, so the British Fascists will find that the novelty of teaching their political grandmothers to suck eggs will soon wear off. It is not necessary to credit Baldwin and Company with supernatural sagacity in order to anticipate that they will always be at least one move ahead of Sir Oswald Mosley.

The followers of this volatile politician may conceivably eclipse the Communists and I.L.P., but Socialists need not get excited about that. If the workers are still in the dark as to the direction to take, these latter bodies must accept a large measure of responsibility. They have induced the workers to support policies for which there was no chance of success. Disillusionment and apathy have, therefore, provided the material from which Mosley may build up a temporary alternative movement.

The S.P.G.B. is not a party of prophets, but whatever the immediate future may hold, we see no reason to deviate from the policy consistently pursued by us for thirty years. Just as we refused to be duped by Moscow, so we decline to be scared by what is happening in other Continental centres.

We realise that the master-class of this country possess means of intimidation as formidable as any that exist. We also realise that they control them through the support which they receive from the non-Socialist members of our class. By all means in our power, therefore, we strive to make Socialists.

E. B.

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## Another "Life" of Marx

It has generally been accepted when quoting from a book—or books—containing a considerable number of letters, to give the date, number of the letter, the page and volume from which it or they are taken. This facilitates verification. The author of any book, provided he has faith in his ability to present an accurate survey of his subject, would disdain to make assertions unsupported by evidence. When an author undertakes to write a "life" of a man like Karl Marx, he should at least pay a tribute to the well-known sincerity of Marx, who always gave the source of his information, and was punctilious to the extreme. His painstaking sincerity is patent. It is well known that Eleanor Marx, in verifying the quotations in the first volume of "Capital," was unable in only one single instance to discover the origin. Marx's assertions were rightly always backed up by evidence. These preliminary observations are necessary because a Mr. E. H. Carr has recently written a "life" of Marx, published by Dent's ("Karl Marx: A Study in Fanaticism." 327 pages. 12/6). In this book innumerable quotations are made and attributed to Marx and others, but in no instance has Mr. Carr given page, date or volume, to indicate the origin of the quotation. No documentation whatsoever is provided to guide the reader to the source of the information. This is procedure of an ignoble character, because in the progress of the book Mr. Carr has misinterpreted not only the words of Marx, but the sense, too. He has been disingenuous and has violated the principles of good taste. His interpretations are derived—so says the writer—from the volumes recently issued and sponsored by the Marx-Engels Institute, of Moscow. These four volumes contain the original letters that passed between Marx and Engels. Most of the letters are in German, but there are numerous digressions into French, English and Italian. These volumes form the basis of Mr. Carr's "life" of Marx.

In the book there is an unending series of quotations, but whatever the nature of these quotations, on no occasion is the specific source given to allow an opportunity for verification. In my view there can only be one reason for this policy. It is that Mr. Carr has *not* read the four volumes: or if he has, is totally unfamiliar with the contents. Even before one reads a word of the preface, one is confronted with a piece of false information. Opposite the title page a photograph of Marx is inset, under which appears the following note:—

From an unpublished photograph.

Actually the *same* photograph was published in an official work issued some time ago by the Marx-Engels Institute, of Moscow. On page 304 of his book, Mr. Carr informs the reader, when dealing with the volumes issued by the Marx-Engels Institute, that—

The first version, the so-called *Gesamtausgabe*, prints the works in the languages in which they were written, and was, until March, 1933, in course of publication at Berlin. The second version is a Russian translation published at Moscow.

On page 305, Mr. Carr adds—

In a few passages originally written in English, I have been compelled by the inaccessibility of the English originals to re-translate from German or Russian versions.

But had Mr. Carr read the *Gesamtausgabe*, the German *original* version, he would know that there was no necessity to retranslate into English, because an English passage written by either Marx or Engels—or anyone else—is retained in its original form, therefore needing no retranslation. Thus, for example, a passage of 11 words taken from a letter from Marx to Engels (line 33, letter 143, dated January 20th, 1852, on page 308 of Vol. I) appears as follows, written in German, English and French!—

Louis kann den Louis Philippe by no means nachmachen. Et alors?

In some letters there are additional phrases from other languages. The statement re "inaccessibility" is mere bluff and pretence, for though Mr. Carr later informs us of letters which are written in English, three of which will be specified later, in no instance has Mr. Carr given an accurate reproduction of these letters, though in the *Gesamtausgabe* they are printed in English.

One essential factor for a clear insight into, and an appreciation of, the correspondence between Marx and Engels, is a knowledge of its chronology and history. One must know that there have been *two* versions of this series of correspondence. The previous issue was—

Der Briefwechsel zwischen Friedrich Engels und Karl Marx. Herausgegeben von A. Bebel und Ed. Bernstein. Bd. I-IV Stuttgart, J. H. W. Dietz, 1913.

Engels made Edward Bernstein his literary executor, on whom devolved the responsibility for issuing the works of both Marx and Engels. (Engels had long begun to arrange and edit the literary works of Marx.)

Bernstein manipulated the correspondence, expunging passages at his discretion, and leaving letters entirely unmentioned. Many of the passages are momentous in the history of Marxism, as we shall see later.

That Mr. Carr makes no reference to the early version is surprising, for it appears to indicate his ignorance of its existence, and, what is more interesting, that he has *not* read the four volumes issued by the Marx-Engels Institute, of Moscow. All Mr. Carr's protestations are unavailing, for there are scores of instances that prove his ignorance of the letters he is supposed to have read, and upon which he has written this "biography" of Marx. Mr. Carr's sublime silence about the *two* versions is interesting. If his "life" of Marx is based upon the correspondence issued by the Marx-Engels Institute, what are we to make of the



mysterious fact that there are no less than 110 pages of valuable introductory material in the correspondence—yet Mr. Carr has not made the slightest reference to it!

Moreover, it is difficult to accept assurance from a "biographer" who gives neither page, date, letter, nor volume, when writing of correspondence between Marx and Engels—dating from October 8th—10th, 1844, to January 10th, 1883—in which there are no less than 1,569 letters.

Mr. Carr gives words incorrectly and inserts others not in the original version. Take page 97 of his book, for example. On this page Mr. Carr refers to the letter written by Engels to Marx announcing the death of his sweetheart, Mary Burns. Mr. Carr does not inform the reader that Engels wrote the letter on January 7th, 1863. If he had read it he would have discovered that Engels forgot the turn of the year, and inserted 1862.

Marx replied on the following day (letter 814, page 117, of Vol. 3) in a curt manner. Engels was rather upset, and, on January 13th, sent Marx a severe letter, the ONLY one of its kind that ever passed between the two friends. Let us read Mr. Carr's account. He says:—

This "frosty" letter, received before Mary was in her grave, struck Engels dumb for four days. All my friends (he wrote at length), including bourgeois acquaintances. . . .

Mr. Carr puts the word "bourgeois" in italics. The word "bourgeois" is NOT in italics in the correspondence. The words are in letter 816, second paragraph, page 118, of Vol. 3. They begin on line 21, and are as follows:—

Alle meine Freunde, einschliesslich Philisterbekannte. . . .

In the Marx-Engels Institute version the words are as above. If italics had been used by Engels (or Marx), this is the way it would have been printed—*Philisterbekannte*.

So much for Mr. Carr's literary rectitude!!

Perhaps the survey of another episode may help in elucidating the mysteries of Mr. Carr's qualifications to write as an "authority" on Marx. On page 67, Mr. Carr indulges speculatively anent the activities of Marx in Paris, and the decision to go to England. As usual, he displays his ignorance of the correspondence, and makes statements that are the reverse of fact. In the last paragraph Mr. Carr states that the decision to emigrate was "the most important landmark in Marx's career."

If this decision is the most important landmark in Marx's career, such observation, interpretation, and justification should be sustained by evidence. But Mr. Carr tenders nothing to prove the great landmark. There are reasons for the serious omission—for Mr. Carr again evidently knows little or nothing of the correspondence of this period. His review on page 67 is deficient in that the

exact relations between Marx and the French police are not clearly detailed, and Mr. Carr's "disclosures" are inadequate. In letter No. 40, dated June 7th, 1849 (page 107, Vol. 1), Marx wrote to Engels that his (Marx's) correspondence was being tampered with, and advised Engels to write to him under the pseudonym of Monsieur Ramboz, 45, Rue de Lille. In the letter No. 43, pp. 111-2, Vol. 1, dated August 17th, Marx again refers to the pseudonym.

In the next letter, No. 44, dated August 23rd, 1849, p. 113, Vol. 1, Marx makes the vital and final decision concerning his future, which Mr. Carr calls the "most important landmark of Marx's career." But once more we discover that Mr. Carr is ignorant of the full contents of these letters. Actually, Marx's decision did not involve him alone, for it changed the whole course of Engel's life, too. "The most important landmark" referred to by Mr. Carr, depended entirely upon the letters referred to above. In the August 23rd letter (No. 44), Marx writes to Engels in Lausanne to inform him that he will not submit to the surveillance of the French police, who desire him to take up residence in the isolated Department of Mobihan (Brittany).

In his fulsome ignorance, Mr. Carr states that "Marx thought of joining Engels in Switzerland." This is a piece of invincible ignorance on the part of Mr. Carr for had he read Marx's letter, he would have found that Marx says (line 14, paragraph 2):—

Nach der Schweiz gibt man mir keinen Pass. (I can get no passport for Switzerland.)

Marx impresses upon Engels to leave Lausanne and go right through to London, where he will join him. Marx is certain of being able to start a literary journal, for which one portion of the money is already available. He tells Engels it seems impossible for him to remain in Switzerland any longer.

Du kannst nicht in der Schweiz bleiben. In London werden wir Geschäfte maen. (You cannot remain in Switzerland. We will do business in London.)

This last sentence is of the utmost importance, for, along with the letter No. 43, dated August 17th, 1849, it showed that Marx was certain that the starting of a journal would provide a living for both Marx and Engels. But the sting is in the tail. Marx appends a footnote to the letter, showing that he had no thought of going to Switzerland. He writes—

Lupus ist bei Dr. Lünig, Zürich. Schreib ihm auch von meinem Plan. (Lupus is with Dr. Lünig in Zürich. Write him also about my plan.)

(Lupus was the famous Wilhelm Wolff to whom Marx dedicated the first volume of "Capital.")

Not one word of this is tendered, explained, or referred to by Mr. Carr on page 67 of his book. Obviously, Mr. Carr does not know of its existence. But there is more than that to it. It suggests the source of Mr. Carr's information, too,

i.e., the 1913 edition. In his preface, on page VIII, Mr. Carr tenders thanks "to a friend who desires to remain anonymous, but who, while differing from many of my conclusions, has generously placed at my disposal a rich stock of Marxist lore." It was in the 1913 edition of the letters that the passage in letter 43, and the sentence from letter 44, "In London werden wir Geschäfte machen," were deliberately omitted. Specific attention is called thereto in the 50-page introduction to Vol 1 of the correspondence issued by the Marx-Engels Institute.

If Mr. Carr had regard for the truth, nothing could have deterred him from giving the page, date, number, and volume from which he was quoting. Let us test Mr. Carr's credentials once more. It concerns an episode of which he writes with exceeding enthusiasm, for which he tenders Marx a surprising encomium. The very instance arouses suspicion. It provides more evidence of Mr. Carr's patent superficiality, and invincible shallowness. On page 109 he refers to Marx's "Eighteenth Brumaire," and says that it

demands quotations not so much for its political importance as for its literary merits. The contorted antithetical style of Marx's early period has been left behind. The "Eighteenth Brumaire" contains some of the simplest and raciest of Marx's writing; and the fierceness of the invective (for Marx always shines at invective) gives it a high place among political broadsides. It may be heartily recommended to anyone who thinks Marx is a dull writer.

Then follows the opening section of the first paragraph of the "Brumaire." Once again his bluff is exposed. For had Mr. Carr read letter No. 134, which Engels wrote to Marx from Manchester on December 3rd, 1851, he would have seen the origin of the passage which was afterwards incorporated into the "Brumaire" by Marx. It is on page 292 of Vol 1. Let any reader examine the opening of the "Brumaire," and he can easily follow the quotation.

alles sich zweimal anspinnen liesse, einmal als grosse Tragödie, und das zweite Mal als lausige Farce, Caussidiere für Danton, L. Blanc für Robespierre, Barthelemy für Saint-Just, Flocon für Carnot, . . . etc. (these things occur twice, first as great tragedy and secondly as paltry farce . . . etc.)

Now, Engels wrote that note to Marx within 24 hours of the coup d'état, and yet later accorded the credit to Marx for the analysis. Knowing the miserable proclivities of Mr. Carr in traducing and reviling Marx on the slightest provocation, he missed here his greatest opportunity of calling Marx a plagiarist, etc. But this lost opportunity is entirely due to Mr. Carr not having read the correspondence; an opportunity he surely would have used to bolster his case against Marx; if he had known of it.

#### The International.

The importance of the "International" is recognised by Mr. Carr, who uses about a quarter of the space of his book to expatiate upon this interesting aspect of Marx's activities.

On page 184 he bursts forth with this serious diatribe:—

The origin of the momentous decision to invite Marx—a decision which determined the whole course of the International from its inception to its death—is wrapped in strange obscurity. It is a depressing commentary on the nature of the evidence on which history is based that, in this comparatively straightforward matter, the historian has before him two mutually contradictory accounts from persons who participated, or purport to have participated, in the transaction. Each of these accounts is demonstrably, or almost demonstrably, false; and each has clearly been distorted by the desire of the narrator to exaggerate the importance of his own role.

If it is demonstrably false, why does Mr. Carr use the curious qualification "almost." If it is "almost" demonstrably false, it isn't quite false. And if it isn't quite false, why worry? The fact is, Mr. Carr has not quite relished his job, and he was in a position of mental suspense in dealing with the matter. Besides, it is clear that he did not appreciate the whole story attributed to Marx. Had Mr. Carr quoted from Marx's letter (No. 876) he might have understood the matter. Had he read the correspondence, he might have quoted the facts, for, in this case, opposite page 196 of Vol 3, Marx's letter is produced in facsimile. Marx tells Engels that a young Frenchman, Le Lubez, about 30 years of age, brought up in Jersey and London, asked Marx if he would care to represent the German workers at the first meeting of the International. Mr. Carr suggests that this story is "demonstrably, or almost demonstrably, false."

If it is demonstrably false, where is the evidence? Mr. Carr produces none. He produces the other version, this time by Marx's old friend, Frederick Lessner.

We will leave it to our readers as to whether there are contradictions. Mr. Carr quotes Lessner, but from what book or pamphlet, he declines to say. Let us, however, quote from Lessner's "Sixty Years of the Social Democratic Movement" (p. 33):

The English committee invited also the "Communistische Arbeiterbildungsverein" to this meeting, and at the same time expressed a wish that Marx should attend this international fraternisation of the working men. The "Communistische Arbeiterbildungsverein" sent me to Marx. I informed him of the wish of the English workmen, and after some inquiries as to the conveners and the object of the meeting, Marx consented to come.

Is that contradictory? What authority Le Lubez had to approach Marx is not discussed by Mr. Carr. Mr. Carr's method of presenting material which cannot be immediately identified from its source, ill-befits him to accuse any person, and then submit no evidence to substantiate the accusations.

Not only is there no contradiction, but there is overwhelming evidence that shows how much Marx's presence was desired and required at the first meeting of the International. Both the Marx version and that of Lessner suggest that steps were being taken by various parties to have Marx's assistance. It is clear there is no mystery



at all about Marx's presence. There is no "strange obscurity" regarding the decision to invite him. True, it is obscure and mysterious to Mr. Carr. Despite all his own trumpetings regarding his first-hand information, in this respect he succeeds in displaying his woeful ignorance and utter unfamiliarity with the accurate sources of information. Mr. Carr does not know that Marx received an official invitation to the first meeting. It proves once more that he has no great knowledge of the literature issued by the Marx-Engels Institute of Moscow, for on page 146 of "Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels," by D. Riazanov, the story is given officially. There it is asked:—

How did he (Marx) happen to be there? A little note found among Marx's miscellaneous papers supplies the answer. It reads:—

Mr. Marx,  
Dear Sir,

The committee who have organised the meeting as announced in the enclosed bill respectfully request the favour of your attendance. The production of this will admit you to the Committee Room where the Committee will meet at half past 7.

Yours respectfully,

(Signed) W. R. CREMER.

W. A. Cremer was the Organising Secretary for the first meeting of the International. He invited Marx. So the statement on page 184 of Carr's book is only "wrapped in strange obscurity" because of the inadequate qualifications possessed by Mr. Carr. In matters historical, Mr. Carr is woefully and abysmally ignorant. Take for example the statement he makes on page 185, concerning Lessner, of whom he writes:—

Lessner had lived in London since the early fifties.

What has Mr. Carr read of the activities of Lessner? He pretends to have quoted from a book of Lessner, but Mr. Carr is as ignorant as an unborn babe of the life of Lessner. Let us deal with this "early fifties" rubbish.

Lessner left London in July, 1848, for Cologne to carry on propaganda in association with Marx and Engels in the Rhineland. After the failure of the insurrectionary movement, Lessner was expelled from Wiesbaden on June 18th, 1850, whereafter he proceeded to Mainz to organise the few revolutionary elements left in the League of Communists. For this same purpose he went to Nuremberg. In June, 1851, he was arrested in Mainz, and detained in custody until a bill of indictment was entered against him 15 months later. His trial commenced on October 4th, 1852. The verdict was given on November 12th, and Lessner was condemned to imprisonment in a fortress for three years. On January 27th, 1856, he was released, making his way to London, where he arrived in May, 1856.

THAT, dear Mr. Carr, was how Lessner spent the "early fifties" in London!

Another elementary example of Mr. Carr's "authority" is the reference to Disraeli, in the

first paragraph on page 201. He writes:—

Disraeli, when he dished the Whigs, had gone a long way towards dishing the International—a body of which he had probably never heard.

That is a priceless gem from Mr. Carr, who pretends to possess something akin to universal knowledge of the working-class movement.

Mr. Carr's assertion means that Disraeli did NOT read the "Times," or other daily papers. But may we deal with the "Times"?

When the International Congress was held at Lausanne, Marx was able to push his friend, Eccarius, into receiving the sum of 2½ guineas per column for reporting the Congress. On Friday, September 6th, 1867, "The Times" had this head-line:—

International Working Men's Congress.  
(From a correspondent.) Lausanne, Sept. 2nd.

Then followed the article. To suggest that Disraeli would not read this is absurd.

Because of the reports that had percolated through Lausanne, "The Times," on September 12th, published a leading article, dealing with the International Working Men's Association (page 6, columns 5 and 6). A year later, Wednesday, September 9th, 1868, "The Times," in its leading article, delivered an attack upon the International (page 6, columns 3 and 4).

Disraeli, who was always pretending to be on the side of the working class, knew all about the International, and aided the organisation to deal a nasty blow at the French Government. Had Mr. Carr read the correspondence between Marx and Engels, he would have known of this, for it is to be found in Vol. 3, page 372 (Letter 1011), December 21st, 1866. In that letter Marx wrote to Engels, pointing out that the French authorities had confiscated some letters and documents belonging to the I. W. M. A., after the Geneva Congress. These papers were obtained at the border. Many demands were made in Paris for their return, without any success. Thereupon Marx claimed them through the British Foreign Office (Lord Stanley was Minister for Foreign Affairs), as the documents were "British Property." As Marx says in the letter, poor Napoleon, through the Foreign Office, is to return all. When action by the Cabinet is necessary it means that at least SOME of England's greatest politicians were aware of the organisations important enough to instigate such action.

There are other cases to show Mr. Carr's ignorance. On page 201, he refers to the Fenian activity during 1867, and that the International held two meetings. "The Dublin papers were well represented," says Mr. Carr. What does that mean? Were the newspaper representatives at both meetings? Mr. Carr does not make it clear at all. There is a reason. Mr. Carr has obviously not read the letters that passed between Marx and Engels.

Only TWO Dublin papers were present at the FIRST meeting, i.e., "The Irishman" and the "Nation." At the second meeting none of the Irish reporters turned up at all. At least, so Marx says, in letter 1079, dated November 30th, 1867, page 456, Vol. 3.

We had better not dismiss this Irish business without a further reference to Mr. Carr and the bluff about his translations from Marx's works (?). On page 305 of his book, we are given an insight into the fine linguistic abilities of Mr. Carr. Says this oracle:—

In quoting from Marx's other writings I have made my own translations. In a few passages originally written in English, I have been compelled by the inaccessibility of the English originals to re-translate from German or Russian versions.

So that's it, is it? On page 202, when dealing with the Fenian movement, Mr. Carr writes of Jenny Marx—as usual he gives no source of origin:—

Young Jenny Marx in the emotional enthusiasm of the early twenties "went in black since the Manchester execution and wore her Polish cross on a green ribbon."

Mr. Carr's quotation is clearly a "translation," for he uses the words "went" and "wore." The reader's attention should be given to this important fact. The changed words predicate the "inaccessibility of the English originals." Once more Mr. Carr proves his unfamiliarity with the Marx-Engels letters. There would have been no difficulty in printing the correct words, for the whole of the passage which Mr. Carr has had to "translate" is—and was—written by Marx in English. This can be found as a footnote to letter 1075, and is on page 453 of Vol. 3, dated November 28th, 1867. These are the words in the footnote:—

My compliments to Mrs. Burns. Jenny goes in black since the Manchester execution, and wears her Polish cross on a green ribbon.

Had Mr. Carr seen the letter, would he have made the blunder of introducing inaccurate words?

We have noted many instances wherein he has falsified quotations. We have had abundant evidence of the meagre and deficient qualifications he possesses to adventure upon a "life" of Marx.

Mr. Carr not only persists in misquoting Marx, but, as might be expected, demonstrates that he does not understand Marxism. Space prevents dealing with other aspects of his book in detail. It may, however, be recorded that he misinterprets the Materialist Conception of History. In one case he expounds it in the very manner to which both Marx and Engels took objection, and warned their "followers" that if their interpretation was Marxism, they (Marx and Engels) were no Marxists. Like most Marx-critics, Mr. Carr dispenses with the knowledge, efforts and abilities of those preceding him, suggesting that his work is, at last! the only correct estimate of Marx and his life. The presumptuousness of Mr. Carr is amazing. Marx's system of

political economy is brushed aside by asserting that Bohm-Bawerk's "Marx and the Close of his System" is the "classical exposure." (I wonder if Mr. Carr has ever heard of Hilferding's reply?) Mr. Carr shows himself incapable of understanding the purpose of "Marx's 'Capital,'" by stating that Marx wanted to

demonstrate that the class-hatred of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie is explained and justified by the "exploitation" of the former by the latter.

In conclusion, it ought to be brought to the notice of the reader that not a single one of the large number of reviews of Mr. Carr's book seen by the writer has shown any evidence of a critical faculty. Not one of these individuals has made the slightest endeavour to examine the book thoroughly. They have accepted Mr. Carr's errors, misquotations and mistranslations without challenge. This is deplorable for one or two of the reviewers profess "to be" advocates of the proletariat, and "advanced" thinkers! It is hard indeed to distinguish between the ignorance of the reviewers and that of Mr. Carr.

MOSES BARITZ.

#### Meeting of Party Speakers and Divisional Organisers.

A meeting of Party Speakers and Divisional Organisers will be held at Headquarters, on Saturday, 14th July, at 7.30 prompt.

ROBERTUS (Organiser).

#### Brentwood (Essex).

Two meetings will be held at Brentwood Station on Sunday, July 8th, at 11.30 a.m. and 7 p.m.

#### RAMBLE

##### ON AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY.

A ramble will take place from LEATHERHEAD to RANMORE over the Surrey Downs.

Meet on Waterloo Station near platform 1 at 10 a.m. Fare 2/3 return.

#### "The Western Socialist"

The Socialist Party of Canada is now publishing a Journal, "The Western Socialist." Copies are obtainable from the Socialist Party of Canada, Manitoba Hotel, 194, Market Avenue East, Winnipeg, at five cents a copy; or at 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, at 2d. per copy (2½d. post free).

#### INDEX to "SOCIALIST STANDARD"

A full index to the "Socialist Standard" for the year September, 1932 to August, 1933, has been prepared and printed. It will be supplied at 1d. per copy (1½d. post free).

Send your order at once to Literature Secretary, 42 Great Dover Street, S.E.1, or apply to local branch.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JULY,



1934

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The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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## Reason or Violence

The meeting held by the Fascists on June 7th at the Olympia, was the occasion of disorder that has prompted a shower of newspaper correspondence, questions in Parliament, and the suggestion that the police should have the right of entry into public meetings.

As far as the information goes, there does not appear to be any doubt that organised groups went to the meeting with the deliberate intention of creating disorder. Why, then, is so much fuss being made over the fact that they were roughly ejected?

The outcry comes from such different quarters as Conservative, Liberal, Labour and Communist. The Conservatives have their own axe to grind, and are not anxious to assist the growth of Mosley's following. The other groups appear to have the wind up.

What is exceedingly curious in the business, however, is the righteous indignation of the Communists—who have gloried in meeting-smashing for years, and promised to suppress all discordant voices if they got power.

In our view, those who went to the Fascist meeting with the intention of creating disorder and making the meeting impossible only got what they asked for, and have no reason to complain if they were roughly handled.

Violence is not a successful method of convincing people of the soundness of a case. In fact, it is usually an admission that the case is threadbare. A case is not destroyed by violent methods, though those who are putting it forward may have to tread cautiously for a while. Anyhow, the

use of violence only provokes violence from the opposition.

One thing that stands out clearly, however, is the fact that these methods play right into Sir Oswald Mosley's hands. He has shown his desire for the spectacular from the beginning, and the nature of the opposition he is receiving is giving him just the advertisement he needs.

The use of violent methods is an attempt to foist on to the majority of people views which they are unwilling or not ready to accept. It used to be a plank in the Syndicalist programme, and has since been the spearhead of the Communists, on the plea that the time for theory is past, and the time for action has come. It fosters the growth of secret movements, and the ubiquitous agent provocateur.

Behind the violent movement stalks the spirit of revenge, and passion instead of reason urges the combatants forward. It plays to the emotions and the worst elements in the population get a footing in the movement, or use the movement to cloak their own actions. This has been illustrated time after time in the history of the working-class movement, and it is therefore essential that those who are genuinely interested in pushing forward the workers' struggle for emancipation should resist all incitements to violence.

The success of violent movements depends upon frightening people and not upon convincing them. It is as well to bear in mind that it is not the capitalist who is frightened, for he has the armed power at his command to crush out opposition when he desires to do so.

It may perhaps be of some use to point out to those who are following methods that kill free discussion, that they are following in the path of their predecessors in Italy and Germany, and provoking the ogre they fear. The starting-point of the Fascist career in Italy was the seizure of the Italian factories by the workers and the propaganda of violence by the Communists. Germany tells a similar tale. It may be added that the country that gave them the lesson was Russia, and one of the principal defenders of Russian violence—Trotzky—is now wandering about seeking an asylum—a victim of the methods he advocated.

It is only by free and open discussion that the workers can grasp the essentials of their present condition of servitude and the way to abolish it. Until they have this knowledge it matters little which of the capitalist parties they support.

While we are on the subject of "freedom of speech" we cannot help being surprised to find what curious, not to say, suspicious friends, this "freedom" has. We see among them the numerous organs of capitalism, which steadfastly decline to allow the publication in their columns of a statement of the Socialist case. We see the "Morning Post," which published grossly inaccurate statements about the Austrian Social Democrats engaged

## An Engineer in Blunderland

*The Great God Waste*, by Mr. John Hodgson (published by the author at Eggington, Beds., 1933, 127 pages, price 2s. 9d.), is a thoroughly bad book, the effect of which is likely to be the spreading of a vast amount of confusion. It is packed with snippets of information, most of them containing more or less of the truth, but used in a most unscientific way to back up a case which will not stand serious examination. The apparent reliability of the details is likely to deceive the uninstructed reader into accepting the false conclusions without examining them any more critically than the author has done.

He describes himself as a "Scientific Engineer" (his capitals), and claims to have evidence of truly stupendous unused or wasted productive powers which can only be released by adopting a currency scheme which he outlines. He sees more or less eye-to-eye with Major Douglas and the American Technocrats—who are also, be it noted, engineers who have lost their way through superficial dabbling with economic problems.

The essence of his scheme is the same as Major Douglas's, i.e., that "purchasing power be distributed as a gift . . . to consumers"

(page 49). It is based, of course, on the familiar fallacy that there is an absolute deficiency of purchasing power (i.e., less "purchasing power" than there are goods). The idea is that this free

in the fighting of February, and then would not publish a correction, although not denying that photographs published in its own pages a few weeks earlier proved the inaccuracy. We see

"Forward," which charged us with mis-statements about Keir Hardie a few years ago and then refused to let us give evidence to show that we were right. We see also Mr. Hamilton Fyfe, who, as Editor of the "Daily Herald," allowed correspondents to discuss our attitude towards religion, but would not let us intervene to explain our position. Maybe the threat presented by Sir Oswald Mosley's movement has induced a change of heart, but if so, there is a quite simple method by which the various political parties and papers can help to promote reasoned discussion, that is by copying the example set by the S.P.G.B., and by it alone, of allowing opponents to state their case in our columns and on our platform. At all of our propaganda meetings (although not at formal debates, where time forbids, or occasional commemoration meetings which do not lend themselves to questions), it is the standing practice of this party to allow questions and opposition, without any attempt to select or restrict. If our various opponents, Sir Oswald Mosley, the Liberals, Labourites, Tories and Communists believe that they have a good case and can answer criticisms, we suggest that they could largely reduce the possibility of rowdy meetings and at the same time promote calm discussion by throwing open their platform to their opponents, as we do to ours.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



distribution will raise the total of purchasing power to a level at which it equals the total of goods, thus enabling production to be increased to any desired level up to the maximum capacity of industry.

Mr. Hodgson is not opposed to capitalism, but only to what he vaguely describes as "Money Power." For him, as for Major Douglas, the non-banking capitalist only wishes to serve the community "and to produce work that will be worthy of his reputation irrespective of the question as to whether he makes a money profit or not" (page 32). Unfortunately, however, the wicked banker steps in and will not allow the industrial capitalist to "indulge this instinct." Of course this is a purely mythical capitalist. The real industrial capitalist is not, as Mr. Hodgson imagines he is, a "craftsman," except where an odd one is, quite incidentally. He is an investor or is in business primarily to make a profit, and he is willing to lay out his money in any direction, banking, brewing, armaments or anything else, provided that there is the prospect of profit. That is the capitalist system, and Mr. Hodgson's dream world (or nightmare world) is only faintly connected with the reality.

One flaw in his scheme can be seen from his statement, on page 45, that what we need in order to rid ourselves of our present ills is to go back to "the days of the banks of private issue" when "credit power" was "widely diffused throughout the community." As we are told on page 29 that the banks of private issue were suppressed by the Bank Charter Act of 1844, this means taking us back to the piping days before 1844. Does Mr. Hodgson then believe that the poverty problem, insecurity, unemployment, foreign investments, commercial wars, etc., have all come into existence only since 1844? Engel's "Condition of the Working Class in 1844" should enlighten him.

The main weakness of the whole argument contained in the book is that the figures used to show a stupendous increase in the productivity of industry are worthless; and as the whole case depends on them, it falls with them. A typical instance of this "Scientific Engineer's" slovenly methods is given on page 101. He says:—

"The modern industrial efficiencies are exemplified by . . . brick-making plants which enable *one man* to produce many thousands of bricks a day." (Italics his.)

This statement may appear to convey a precise meaning to Mr. Hodgson's superficial view, but actually it tells us nothing at all about productivity because it does not tell us anything about the number of men needed to produce and maintain the plant. To give an obvious example, a change-over from ten men making 1,000 bricks a day by some laborious hand method, to a system by which one man operates a complicated plant also turning out 1,000 bricks a day, would only represent an

increase in productivity if the plant itself, during its lifetime, required for its construction, operation, maintenance, etc., less than the labour of nine men on an average. The employers will be willing to introduce such a plant if they can save the labour of, say, one man out of the ten. The fact that machinery ordinarily does not increase productivity to the large extent supposed is shown by the slowness with which older methods of production are driven out. Often the margin of difference is so small that a slight fall in wages will be sufficient to check the introduction of "labour-saving" machinery. Mr. Hodgson is so busy piling up hundreds of instances of industrial development which he imagines support his case, that he has no time to examine any one of them properly. The real position is that an increase in productivity does take place, but only to a moderate extent in comparison with these fantastic guesses. Increased productivity in any industry cannot be measured by what happens in the last process only, but must take into account the whole of the processes from raw material to finished product, and must include the labour used up in the construction, operation, etc., of machinery.

The fallacy can be illustrated from another angle. From time to time figures are published showing how a bootmaker working a machine can turn out ten or more times as many boots as was possible by hand, or with a less elaborate machine, a few years earlier. These figures are assumed to prove that the productivity of the boot-making industry as a whole has been multiplied by ten, and that the amount of labour required in the making of a pair of boots has been reduced to one-tenth. One man who has swallowed this notion at a gulp is Mr. Johnston, Editor of *Forward*. He is a supporter of the Co-operative Movement. If the Co-operative Movement and other boot manufacturers can now produce boots with one-tenth or less of the labour required, say, ten years ago, why are they still selling boots at prices which are not much less than formerly? Why are not boots being sold at 2s. a pair.

The same holds good for all the other articles they make and sell and for which a vast increase in productivity has been claimed. (If there had been a vast increase in the productivity of gold-mining this would extricate them from their dilemma, but no such increase is even claimed.)

Mr. Hodgson supplies a still better illustration of his own fallacy. He says that he is engaged in engineering processes the effect of which is to displace labour, and he calculates that he alone has put 20,000 people into unemployment (page 13). He also tells us (page 8) that he is "only one worker, and quite a small worker at that, out of many workers in a world-wide field of endeavour which has for its objective the reduction of industrial waste."

Now, if Mr. Hodgson, who is "quite a small worker" in this field, can put 20,000 men out of work, some of his engineering colleagues who are really good at their job can no doubt, in his opinion, claim their 50,000 or 100,000 victims. Suppose we take an average of 30,000. Then it only needs ten of them to produce 300,000 unemployed; and fifty of them will explain the whole of the 1½ million unemployed added to the unemployment register during the crisis years 1928 to 1932. So far so good. Mr. Hodgson and forty-nine colleagues are sufficient to explain the whole lot. But what were they up to in the years 1922 to 1928, when unemployment *decreased* by a million? Were they asleep? And what have they been doing during the past twelve months, during which the number of insured workers in employment is estimated to have increased by over 600,000? Mr. Hodgson has not even begun to understand capitalism and its crises.

His book does nothing to support his view that "specialists" and "experts" are better fitted than other people to handle the poverty problem. On the contrary, it is to be hoped, for the sake of human safety, that engineers do not treat engineering problems in the sloppy, hit-or-miss fashion that so many of them employ when they write books telling us what they think about economics.

H.

## State Banking in Australia

### Another Quack Remedy

In the *Glasgow Forward* (October 21st, 1933), Tom Johnson takes G. D. H. Cole to task for omitting to mention the results of State banking in Australia in his recently published work, "What Everybody wants to know about Money."

As Mr. Johnson seems highly incensed at this omission one would expect that he would have supplied the deficiency and would have tried to show what good things State banking has achieved for the workers of Australia. But Tom deserves the carrot for modesty, for he does not even attempt it. For the benefit of those workers who are always being lulled to political sleep by references to Australia's magnificent "socialistic" examples, let us speak for ourselves. First let us give a few facts.

The biggest State-controlled Bank in Australia is the Commonwealth Bank. It was established in 1911 and has been a profitable concern for the Government ever since. Up to the 20th anniversary the aggregate profits were:—

General Bank	...	£6,943,942	11	9
Savings Bank	...	2,781,995	19	9
Rural Bank	...	328,078	11	2
		£10,054,017	2	8

These figures are exclusive of the note issue branch. These profits have been distributed as follows:—

To Capital Account	...	£4,000,000	0	0
Reserve Fund	...	1,406,580	13	3
Rural Bank Reserve	...	164,039	5	7
Savings Bank Reserve	...	658,382	3	10
National Debt Sinking Fund	...	2,660,975	14	5

£10,054,017 2 8

These figures are from the *Commonwealth Year Book* and *Labor Daily Year Book*. They show that nearly one-third of the profits went into the National Debt Sinking Fund.

A common claim made on behalf of the Bank is that the profits go to lighten the "people's burden" by helping wipe off the National Debt. But that is the crux of the whole matter, how does wiping off the National Debt help the workers. Reducing the National Debt reduces the amount of interest payable to bondholders, and thus enables the Government to reduce taxation. Reduced taxation, however, does not help the workers, but only the propertied class. What the workers get is their wages. If, owing to reduced taxation, the workers' cost of living is reduced, their pay is reduced likewise. It is on that rock that all the reformist schemes for bettering the workers' condition under Capitalism are wrecked. As a prominent advocate of debt reduction by means of a capital levy (Mr. Pethick Lawrence) once admitted, it was merely a redistribution of wealth among the wealthy only.

If therefore State banking is a success it is as an adjunct of Capitalism. According to Senator Barnes, Labour Party, "The Commonwealth Bank has made a profit of 31 million pounds since its establishment." (*Melbourne Herald*, February 5th, 1934.) In the book of the Commonwealth Bank (an official publication by C. C. Fawcner) we are told that "The bank's policy was not to enter into aggressive competition with the existing financial institutions, and this was shown by determining the rates of interest on fixed deposits at ½ per cent. below those quoted by the leading trading banks." (p. 42.) And so that our masters could facilitate their business, "the rate fixed (for overdrafts) by the Commonwealth Bank had a marked effect in keeping down interest rates, to the benefit of the commercial and business community throughout Australia." (p. 42.)

Some of the chief functions performed by the Commonwealth Bank have been Raising War Loans, Financing Naval Projects, Building Railways, Financing War Expenditure, Financing Pools for wheat, wool, etc.

### Bank Loans to House Purchasers

One of the main functions of the State Savings Bank (Victoria) was the financing of home-build-



ing under what is known as the Credit Foncier system. Under the Act of 1920, authority is given to the Commissioners to purchase and build houses for persons who have an income of not more than £400 per annum, and who do not own a house. The limit is, if the house be of wood, £1,000, and of brick, stone, or concrete, £1,300.

The interest charged was 6½ per cent., and the terms of payment allowed for the paying off of the house in 26 years. The funds for this branch of the Bank's operations were raised by the issue of Credit Foncier Debentures, which were guaranteed by the Government of Victoria.

The net profit for the year 1928-29 was £34,032, and for 1929-30, £24,591. These profits are allocated for the purpose of meeting any losses that may occur. Savings Bank debentures pay 5½ per cent. (1940) and 4½ per cent. (1936). The interest on these debentures comes out of the 6½ per cent. paid by the workers who are purchasing their homes, and should this source fail, the Government foots the bill.

"Of the 46,100 loans in the Credit Foncier Department 58 securities were in the possession of the Bank at June 30th, 1930, on which the indebtedness was £34,183. To September 11th, 1930, 22 of these had been sold, reducing the number to 36 and the amount to £19,847. During the year, 86 properties were sold for £65,876, and resulted in a small loss (£1,412), but an amount of £1,162 which had been written off in former years, was recovered." (*Victorian Year Book*, 1929-30.)

As the depression became worse, the number of houses reverting to the banks owing to the inability of the purchasers to keep up their payment increased rapidly. In 1930-31 the number in possession of the Bank at June, 1931, was 315, about seven out of every 1,000.

So great did the number of reversions to the Bank become that the figures were conveniently concealed from the public by not being published in the annual reports. Some idea of the huge increase can be gained when it is learned that a separate department was set up in the Bank to cope with it. Besides, owing to the inability of the Bank to dispose of many of the re-possessed houses, it was deemed wiser to leave the tenants in charge rather than risk the deterioration which accompanies an untenanted dwelling. Inquiries at the Bank reveal a reticent attitude with regard to particulars pertaining to this side of its activities.

In South Australia a similar position obtained.

Just prior to the depression the Board of Management of the State Bank of South Australia reported "that for the year ended June 30th, 1928, 106 houses reverted to the Bank through tenants being unable to continue payments or through their vacating premises because of inability to pay. The properties are now being sold by the Bank.

The number of reverted properties for the previous year was 78." The position in South Australia is said to be even worse than Victoria!!

In New South Wales, owing to political tactics by both State Labour Government and Federal Nationalist Government, the State Savings Bank had to close its doors altogether, and the business was taken over by the Commonwealth Bank. Pending an agreement being arrived at as to the terms of taking over, many depositors were forced on to the dole.

The foregoing facts could have been easily obtained by Mr. Johnson had he any desire to show some of the "results of the State Banks in Australia." Mr. Johnson has a lot to learn about State Banking in so far as it affects the working class.

Let us ask Mr. Johnson a few questions.

In what way do the floating of war loans, the financing of wheat pools, the building of State Railways, and the granting of big overdrafts at low rates of interest, improve the position of the working class?

How much better off are those workers who began to purchase homes under the Credit Foncier System only to lose them (as they would have, had they bought them off private institutions), when the depression deprived them of their jobs?

Is not the abolition of the Capitalist system and all its appendages more in keeping with working-class interests, and would not the Johnsons, the Coles, and others of their ilk, be better occupied in helping to establish Socialism? We know that the whole Capitalist system, including the banking system, has got to go before the workers come into their own. And with all due modesty we say to Mr. Johnson, "It's never too late to learn."

W. J. C.

(Socialist Party of Australia.)

#### West London (Chiswick).

A branch has been formed in the West London (Chiswick) area. Members and sympathisers are invited to attend meetings of the branch on Friday evenings, at 8 p.m., at Chiswick Club, over 376, High Road, Chiswick, W 4.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Leyton.

A Speakers' Class is held every Thursday from 7 to 8 p.m. (prior to Branch Meeting) at Grove House, High Road, Leyton, N. Instructor—Com. Lester.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Bloomsbury.

The indoor meeting organised by the Bloomsbury branch will be discontinued during July and August owing to holidays and resumed in September.

## The Labour Theory of Value Before Karl Marx

The labour theory of value is the view that the value of an article is determined by its cost of production in human labour power—according to the conditions of the time. In its fully developed form it was analysed and explained in detail by Karl Marx in "Capital." We are not concerned at the moment with the theory as it was finally worked out. We are only concerned with the forerunners of Marx, who contributed something to the view. Owing to limits of space we can only consider briefly the most outstanding of these forerunners.

Value presented an insoluble problem for over two thousand years. The first glimmerings of a solution did not appear until the middle of the seventeenth century, when a society mainly concerned with the buying and selling of goods began to take definite shape in this country and was in process of taking shape on the Continent.

As far back as the time of Aristotle—two thousand three hundred years ago—the problem was in the air. Aristotle himself, in his "Politics," and in his "Ethics," had something to say about it. He knew that there must be some property common to objects as unlike as bread and shoes that made it possible to measure them against each other. He knew that the common property was not their usefulness, but he was unable to find out what it really was. He ends his examination rather lamely with the remark that people have agreed to estimate value in money. And this after he had already pointed out that exchange existed before money. He makes the illuminating remark, however, that profit-making originated with coin.

For hundreds of years this formed the limit of knowledge on the subject.

As commerce spread over society and accumulating money became increasingly the aim in social dealings, the question of the value of money came more and more to the front, particularly when succeeding representatives of the royal treasury sought to build up waning funds by debasing the coinage. Consequently, during the later middle ages, a considerable literature grew up around monetary matters. With the dawn of capitalist society, in the 17th century, the question became acute. The problem before the writers was: How did wealth originate? Or, as we would put it: What was the source of surplus-value?

Out of these discussions two main schools of thought developed. The Mercantilists and the Physiocrats, one English and the other French. The Mercantilists claimed that wealth accumulated by means of trade, through buying from the foreigner cheap and selling to him dear. In other words, by having a "favourable balance

of trade," an idea that still persists, as witness the nature of the discussions during the recent financial crisis. The Mercantilists, consequently, propagated the view that the traders were the most important group in the nation and were the builders of the nation's wealth. An idea quite in harmony with conditions that were raising the trader to the most influential position in society.

Thomas Mun, a leading merchant of the time and a director of the East India Company, wrote a book that was published in 1664 entitled "England's Treasure by Foreign Trade," which puts forward the Mercantilist view very clearly and vigorously.

The Physiocrats, a group that originated nearly a hundred years later in France, a country whose main prop at the time was agriculture, held an entirely different view. According to them, wealth originated solely in agricultural production, as it was only by farming that a man received back for his work more than it cost to keep him, and, out of the surplus, the trader and the rest of the population lived. Turgot, a prominent Physiocratic writer, who appeared towards the end of their influence, puts their outlook very clearly in his book, "Reflections on the Formation and the Distribution of Riches," published in 1766. The Physiocratic doctrines were an expression of the interests and outlook of the capitalist farmer, and Mirabeau, one of their leading political representatives, took a prominent part in the French Revolution.

Turgot was a very clear thinker. He had a considerable knowledge of history and had travelled far enough intellectually to point out that the labourer's wage was determined by his cost of subsistence.

Sir William Petty, an important member of the Mercantilist school of thought, was the first to make a real contribution to the labour theory of value. In a book he wrote that was published in 1662 and entitled "A Treatise on Taxes," he states quite plainly that it is labour that gives value to things, but, under the influence of his trading outlook, he defines exchange-value as money, and the particular labour employed in the production of gold and silver as the value-producing labour. Hence he was led into confusion.

He wrote a series of essays in "Political Arithmetic," which represents the first form in which economics is treated as a separate department of knowledge. These essays are remarkable for brevity and clarity. In one of them he explains in a paragraph the significance of the division of labour as illustrated by a watch, and he does it in a manner that showed he had a clearer grasp of the point than Adam Smith, although, writing a hundred years earlier. Adam Smith confused the social division of labour with the division of labour inside a single workshop, but Petty made no such mistake.



In 1733, Richard Cantillon, another merchant, wrote his book "On the Nature of Commerce in General." In it he stated that the value of a thing was nothing more than the measure of the land and the labour which enters into its production. He was influenced by the Physiocratic idea of the importance of agriculture, as also to some extent was Adam Smith. Cantillon held the view that the daily work of the humblest slave corresponded in value to twice the produce of the land on which he subsisted.

After Petty there was another thinker, probably the clearest thinker of his age, who put forward the labour theory of value in a broad form. This man was Benjamin Franklin, who, in 1729, when barely twenty-three years of age, wrote an essay entitled "A Modest Inquiry into the Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency." In this essay he argues that the value of articles is measured by the time taken to produce them, but he considers that money has an extra value on account of the way in which it facilitates exchanges. In spite of his clearness of thought he, like his predecessors, was lost in the mystery of money. In fact, all those who preceded Marx got into difficulties when they came to treat of money. In their efforts to analyse money they frequently contradicted the sound views they had previously put forward on value in general.

Another youthful writer, an Italian named Ferdinando Galiani, published a book, in 1750, entitled, "Dell Moneta." He was only twenty-two years old when he wrote it. In this book he pointed out that labour was the sole source of value, but he confused the wages of the worker with the value of the article produced. For instance, he contended that the value of a woollen article was equal to the cost of the raw wool plus the cost of supporting the men who produced the woollen article.

In 1777, Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations" appeared. In it he attributed the accumulation of wealth to the division of labour. He made a considerable advance in the analysis of questions concerning economics, but he was still far from understanding the real nature of value. He held that the determination of the value of an article by the labour-time taken to produce it was true of earlier times, but not of the developed capitalism of his day. He also fell into the same error as Galiani, confusing the value of what a man produces with the value of what he gets—his wages. If this view were accepted, then the value of all the articles produced would only be equal to the total wages paid to the workers who produced them. This was the state of affairs the later utopians yearned for and what they would have called "fair exchanges." Adam Smith also failed to see that the labour of an engineer and the labour of a bootmaker could not be compared as such—they had both to be reduced to a com-

mon basis, the simple expenditure of human energy.

How weak Adam Smith's grasp of the problem was may be gathered from the fact that he put "labouring cattle" under the heading of productive labourers, and also attributed value-creating properties to "profits of stock" and to the forces of nature.

The progress in knowledge of the labour theory before Marx really ended with David Ricardo, a stockbroker, who made the final contribution in his book, "On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation," published in 1817. His fundamental proposition is that the values of all articles, including the value of labour-power, is determined by the labour required to produce them with the prevailing skill and methods. But, as Frederick Engels has pointed out, Ricardo did not see that it was labour-power and not labour that was the value-producing quality, and hence, that the transformation of money into capital was based upon the buying and selling of labour-power. It was the discovery of this fact that gave Marx the key to the problem, and it was Ricardo's failure to see it that landed him into difficulties when he came to treat of the more complex forms of money.

As a capitalist himself, and one who made a fortune on the stock exchange, Ricardo was quite clear, in fact brutally clear, about the basis of the present social system and its aim, which, he pointed out, was production for profit. He was against State interference in industry, and contended that wages should be left to free competition. He also held the view that the prevailing economic tendency was for wages and rent mutually to increase until they swallowed profit, and he foresaw a time when all property would belong to owners of land and receivers of tithes and taxes. He was quite clear, however, about the fact that neither wages nor profit, nor rent, entered into the determination of the value of an article. Surplus-value, he showed, was the portion of value left after deducting the wages of the producer from the value he added, but he was inclined to confound surplus-value with profit.

As already mentioned, the analysis of value really ended with Ricardo. Nobody after him added anything of importance to his work. The so-called "Ricardian Socialists" who followed him accepted his view that labour was the source of value, and, on the basis of it, demanded that all products should belong to the labourer.

The first of these writers was William Thompson, an Irish landlord, who, in 1824, wrote a book entitled "An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth most conducive to human Happiness." As the title of his book suggests, the ideas of the "Utilitarian" philosopher, Bentham, had an influence on his outlook. He defined the existing social system as one of force and fraud, and he proposed a new system on Owenite

principles. He was very much interested in the Owenite co-operative experiments and visited the Owenite colony at Ralahine, in Ireland.

He took as his basis the view that all wealth is the product of labour. He contended that all men are equal, or nearly so, and therefore capable of producing equal quantities of wealth. Wealth is unequally divided, therefore the few possessors must abstract it from the many producers.

Neither he nor those of the same group who followed him really understood the nature of value. They thought the seller arbitrarily raised the value of articles above the wages paid to the producers, which they took to be the real value. He held that labour was not, at present, an accurate measure of value, on the ground that desires are apt to vary, but he contended that in a future social system such as he proposed, commodities would exchange at the "value of real use." He assumed that the future system would also be a system of commodity production, but "fair" exchange would be the social principle.

Thompson's confused views of value are illustrated by the fact that he believed machinery added additional value to products beyond the value as mere instruments of production, and also that, in certain instances where labour is saved in the production of an article, value is added to it by this saving of labour.

In 1825, a year after Thompson's book appeared, Thomas Hodgskin wrote his "Labour Defended against the Claims of Capital," and, in 1827, "Popular Political Economy." Hodgskin, a retired naval officer, was a friend of Francis Place and a member of the radical circle that gathered round Jeremy Bentham.

He also argued that the labourer should receive the whole of his product, but he included in the term "labourer" the master and the buyer and seller. He accepted commodity-production as the basis of a future society, but wanted to rule out profit. On the question of value, he was not clear. He confused the value of goods with the quantity, and asserted that the more goods there were the greater was the total value, in spite of a proportional decrease in the quantity of labour required to produce them. He also appeared to think that profit and rent were amounts added on to the value of articles.

Although his outlook on this fundamental question was confused, Hodgskin's destructive criticism of existing society provided the Chartists with useful weapons in their struggle. He did a considerable amount of lecturing, founded with Robertson the "Mechanics' Magazine," in 1823, and was instrumental in the founding of the Mechanics' Institute, where he lectured. He later joined the staff of the *Economist* and the *Morning Chronicle*, dropped out of the active propaganda movement, and lived to a ripe old age.

After Hodgskin comes John Gray, a successful business man, who delivered a series of lectures on "The Nature and Use of Money," which were published in book form in 1831 and again later in 1848. In these lectures he claimed to have discovered the real source of social troubles, which he attributed to a flaw in the monetary system. He urged that demand should be based upon production, instead of production being based upon demand, which, he claimed, was the basis of the existing system. He proposed to rectify matters by establishing standard banks which would issue credit in the form of transferable vouchers based upon the stock, etc., or, in other words, based upon the powers of production.

So convinced was Gray of the soundness and the magnitude of his discovery that he had his book widely distributed, particularly to economists and universities, and he offered a hundred guineas to anyone who could refute his views. In recent times the Douglas Credit Theory has had a certain popularity, but there is little in the fallacious theories of the Douglas scheme that was not anticipated by Gray a hundred years ago.

Gray's views on value were quite erroneous. He believed that gold was no true measure of value and that there was none. He contended that the scarcity of gold prevented its value from being determined by labour. He, again, took for granted the continuation of commodity-production, but proposed that, in future, labour should be the measure of value. This was to be accomplished by the producer fixing his own price for his product and the competition of producers determining whether this price was right or not!

Gray was, at one time, considerably influenced by the views of Robert Owen, and, in 1815, he managed an Owenite colony at Orbiston.

The last writer we will refer to is J. F. Bray, a journeyman printer and the author of "Labour's Wrongs and Labour's Remedy," published in 1839. His book is long and very wordy and full of conceptions of justice and equal rights, inspired by the economic analysis of Ricardo. His fundamental proposition is that as the earth is common to all, and labour is the sole source of wealth, each human being has a right to the fruits of his own labour. He claimed that as wealth was produced by labour, the capitalist, who did not work, lived by the legalised robbery of the producer. He claimed further that the problem was the same in all countries, whatever their form of government, and that, therefore, the solution applied internationally. A strain of anarchism runs through his writings, but he made some very apt criticisms of existing arrangements and had very clear conceptions on particular points.

His fundamental ideas, however, clouded his analysis of the present economic framework. He believed that the capitalist made his profit through



## Open Air Meetings

### JULY

#### Saturdays

West Green Corner, Tottenham	8 p.m.	Rushcroft Road, Brixton, Opp. Lambeth Town Hall	7.30 p.m.
Jolly Butcher's Hill, Wood Green	8 p.m.	Wendover Road, Jubilee Clock, Harlesden	7.30 p.m.

#### Sundays

		1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
Clapham Common	6 p.m.	Turner.	Manion.	Banks.	Ross.	Russell.
Finsbury Park	5.30 p.m.	Ambridge.	Godfrey.	Butler.	Kohn.	Jacobs.
Victoria Park	6 p.m.	Butler.	Innes.	Cash.	Turner.	Wiltshire.
Brockwell Park	6 p.m.	Russell.	Isbitsky.	Ambridge.	Wilmot.	Turner.
Queen's Road, Bayswater, near Whiteley's	7.30 p.m.	Isbitsky.	Reginald.	Turner.	Ambridge.	Wilmot.
Cock Hotel, East Ham	7.30 p.m.	Reginald.	Ambridge.	Kohn.	Bell.	Butler.
Liverpool Street, Walworth, Camberwell Gate	11.30 a.m.	Banks.	Bell.	Godfrey.	Banks.	Turner.
Whipps Cross Corner	8 p.m.	Rubin.	Butler.	Lestor.	Waters.	Ambridge.
Southend, Sea Front	11.30 and 7.30 p.m.	Lestor.	Turner.	Rubin.	Cash.	Isbitsky.

<b>Sundays:</b>	King's Hall Picture Palace, Bakers Arms, Leyton	12 o'clock
<b>Mondays:</b>	Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8	8 p.m.
	Highbury Corner, N.	8 p.m.
	"Heaton Arms," Rye Lane, Peckham, S.E.	8 p.m.
<b>Wednesdays:</b>	West Green, Corner, Tottenham, N.	8 p.m.
	Windsor Road, Forest Gate, E.	8 p.m.
	"Prince of Wales," Harrow Road, W.	8 p.m.
	Clock Tower, Avenue Road, Lewisham, S.E.	8 p.m.
<b>Thursdays:</b>	Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8.	8 p.m.
	"Salmon and Ball," Bethnal Green, E.	8 p.m.
<b>Fridays:</b>	Ilford Station, E.	8 p.m.

#### Sheffield

<b>Sundays:</b>	Barker's Pool	7.30 p.m.
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unequal exchanges—buying goods at their values and selling them for more than their values. For instance, he saw that the capitalist paid the worker for a day's labour a wage that was only equivalent in value to the product of half a day's labour, but he did not see that what the worker was paid was the value of his labour-power. He did not realise the implication of his view. He fell into the same error as many before him and believed that value was equivalent to the wages paid to the producer.

Like the rest of the Utopians, Bray believed that the world had been searching for thousands of years for a just form of society and it was now discovered. To him the correct society was the result of knowledge based upon first principles which were true for all time, and could have been established as easily two thousand years ago as to-day.

It will, therefore, be seen that he had no fresh contribution to make to the labour theory of value. On one point, however, he was quite clear and emphatic—that mere governmental changes would not alter the worker's position. Hence he advocated a complete change in the social basis—but it was not really so complete as he imagined.

To sum up, it may be said that the analysis of value from the point of view of the labour theory begins in 1662 with Petty, and ends in 1817 with Ricardo. Although the Utopians did not further this analysis, they did excellent service

in pushing forward the worker's case, in the course of which they made valuable and biting criticisms of capitalist society. As Marx has pointed out, the kernel of the matter was contained in their outlook, and their attitude logically led to Socialist ideas.

GILMAC.

#### Trade Union Branches

The Socialist Party of Great Britain is prepared to consider applications from Trade Unions and other organisations for a representative to state the case for Socialism. Travelling expenses only are required.

#### CORRECTIONS.

In the article "Forecasts and Fallacies," published in the May issue the word "organisations" was inadvertently omitted in the fourth line from the bottom of the second column on page 141, after the word "labour."

In the article "Canada's White Hope" in the June issue the words "Brazil Trust" (line 38, col. 2, page 157), should have been printed "Brain Trust."

Owing to pressure of space the "Branch Directory" is unavoidably held over till next month.

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# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[Monthly. Twopence

*The powers of  
production are  
sufficient to  
maintain the  
whole human  
race in com-  
fort; Capital-  
ism prevents  
their use for  
this purpose.*

## Dangers of Leadership

Leadership has always been an accepted fact in social movements and particularly in movements concerning workers. William Lovett has much that is bitter and to the point to say about it in his autobiography which covers that part of the last century when independent movements of workers were beginning. Of late years leadership has gained perhaps even more prominence owing to the Bolshevik movement and the various dictatorships. In fact, it would appear as if leaders have at last really come into their own.

For centuries it has been taken for granted that some few people in all walks of life are specially marked out to lead their fellows. The source or foundation for this view is the one

constant factor that has been present in society across ages, and in spite of different forms of social organisation. This constant factor has been the existence of private property in the means of living. The development of private property gave some people a privileged position in relation to their fellows. It gave them the oppor-

tunity to exercise power, and it also provided them with the leisure and the means to acquire knowledge that in turn gave them a higher standing in the eyes of their less fortunate fellows. It was owing to this that the famous people of olden times could spend their lives orating, poetising and philosophising, while those who provided them with subsistence spent laborious days.

It may therefore be noticed to begin with that leadership is an attribute of property. Some adherents of the leadership idea have sought to prove that it is an attribute of humanity, or even a biological attribute; as a proof of this it has been urged that the leader is a regular feature of herding animals; the bull that is lord of the buffalo herd being brought forward as an illustration very much to the point.

One simple fact, however, disposes of this view without the need to go further, and it is that leadership, meaning one who directs, controls and is followed, is unknown to primitive people. Lewis Morgan has shown this in his book, "Ancient Society," by his description of the method of government practised among the Indian tribes with whom he lived. Elliot Smith, in his "Human History," makes the following remarks on the point, which are worth quoting:

"Amongst really primitive peoples in which there is no social organisation except the family groups, there is no hereditary leader. In fact, the circumstances of life were so simple and uncomplicated that there was little scope for leadership. When decisions have to be made, one of the old men takes the lead, or several of them form a council of elders. As the social system develops there are councils of elders for the village, and a combination of such for the clan, and representatives of the clans form a tribal council, which governs the whole community" (page 298).

Elliot Smith's testimony about primitive

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peoples is particularly useful, as he bases his book on the view that "great men" are responsible for shaping the destiny of the world.

Leadership, then, is associated with the development of private property, and it is so because the institution of private property provided conditions in which the domination of man by man became possible. Leadership is a form of domination.

The constant wrangling by leaders of opposing factions who put forward contradictory explanations and solutions for the various social problems exposes one of the weaknesses of leadership and also disposes of the idea that leaders obtain and deserve their domination on the ground that they are experts in their particular fields. A glaring example of this is the free trade leader versus the protectionist leader, each putting forward an opposite policy and each claiming his remedy as the only one that will meet evils that are identical. As one of them, if not both, must be wrong, the only way to know is to find out for yourself—which means that you do not need their guidance.

At present there is an excellent illustration in the world at large which makes plain the weaknesses of leadership. World leaders with great reputations as economic experts are at loggerheads over the methods to deal with the commonest evils that capitalism breeds. Even the crises that occur at more or less regular intervals are still an unsolved riddle to them. Statisticians have gathered multitudes of figures, volumes have been written on the subject, and yet these experts are still at sea.

It is urged, for reasons that need not be gone into at the moment, that leadership is essential to the working-class movement. A short time ago an unemployed march on London was organised. Just before the marchers reached London, two of the important figures in the business, Pollitt and Hannington, were arrested. In the true spirit of leadership they complained that the Government did this foul deed in order to defeat the object of the marchers, which apparently could only be reached through their good offices. If this is so, then how easy it would be for governments to defeat any working-class movement—all that need be done is to clap the leaders in jail and the followers would wander hopelessly like lost sheep.

Where a movement depends for success upon leadership it is only necessary to cut off the head to defeat the movement. The physical-force Chartists learned this to their cost nearly a hundred years ago, when the government of the day called the bluff of Feargus O'Connor during the attempted mass presentation of the Great Charter. O'Connor hurried away from the scene of his discomfiture, and left his followers in bewilderment to a tame and despondent dispersal.

This weakness of leadership has been demonstrated on numerous occasions from that day to this—and most disastrously in the various Communist, Syndicalist and similar movements.

It is true that economic ills give leaders their opportunity, but it is not true that remedies can be devised and applied by means of leaders. In fact, the numerous examples, such as those of Burns, Briand and MacDonald, strongly support the view that the remedy for the workers' ills will have to be applied in spite of leaders.

Another thing to notice about leaders in the working-class movement is that these leaders lead from behind. That is to say, they can only follow the course the mass agrees to follow. The first thing a leader must do, therefore, is to convince the mass that the course he proposes following is the best one for the mass. Out of this dependence on the mass arises rivalry and antagonism amongst leaders, each striving for support; the building up of cliques and the existence of mutual backscratching.

It is this also that has helped on so considerably the intrigues and internecine warfare that plays a prominent part in labour politics, certain features of which provide post-war writers of memoirs with ample and spicy material.

The fact that leaders must lean on masses has developed a complex technique in the art of getting and holding office. But the crowd is fickle, and no leader can be sure of security unless, like Shackleton, who became Government Labour Adviser, or Middleton, who became an Ecclesiastical Commissioner, he obtains a permanent government job free from the influence of people or party.

Leaders do not necessarily start out with the idea of making a career or tricking their followers. What generally happens is that they gradually drift into a position where their interests are not identical with those of their followers. Leaders who have sprung from poor circumstances dread the possibility of falling back into the ranks of those looking for employment, and consequently they do all they can to keep in existence trade union and political jobs, and to hold on to the jobs they have obtained. Any attack upon the job either by erstwhile followers or budding rivals is bitterly resented. At times, where circumstances dictate it, the interests of followers are sacrificed to the interests of keeping the job. The callous way in which many who have risen to position on the backs of followers and have then abandoned those followers for a political job is a sufficient illustration of this job hungriness.

This job business is also a consideration when the question of strike action comes up for decision. In general, leaders who have "got there" favour arbitration rather than strikes, because strikes tend to deplete union funds and limit the capacity of unions to provide jobs for officials. Perhaps it has

also influenced the scared and bitter attitude towards such movements as Fascism. Leaders who have professed anti-war sentiments for years are now prepared to go to war in the event of Fascism being the enemy—a point the capitalists will bear in mind for future use, and maybe England's future antagonists will be vilified as Fascists instead of Huns!

The tendency of leadership is also towards conservatism—to keeping things going as they are. Hence they resent criticism. They are often in a better position to obtain a grasp of the situation than the rank and file, and this tends to give them an inflated idea of their own capacity. Routine work develops caution and irritability at anything that is not customary. Further, they do not want any change in conditions that appear to guarantee them security, and hence they look with suspicion upon anything new.

The position of working-class leaders also puts them in touch with a social sphere that was formerly unknown to them, and one that is in close touch with many of the desirable things of life. They are made much of in this new sphere and get the reputation of being practical and respectable, and they strive, at first without deliberate intention, to live up to this reputation.

Leaders, of course, are of various kinds, and since the labour movement has grown large, offering well-paid jobs to its higher officials, it has attracted young men from the universities who are quite plainly only concerned with a career.

The qualities that make leaders are also of various kinds. In some cases it is merely oratorical powers, in others a capacity for intrigue, and in others again, a capacity for routine work. Hard cheek is also a helpful quality.

Frequently a leader commences his career as a firebrand and then gradually drifts into the "respectable" camp. Aristide Briand, the late French Prime Minister, was at one time a fiery advocate of the General Strike, and John Burns, sometime Liberal Cabinet Minister, was also a prominent strike leader in his early days. If one were to credit Briand and Burns with sincerity one could hardly credit them with capacity and foresight as leaders of a working-class movement when their attitude underwent such a revolutionary change. They could not have it both ways.

It is also well to reflect that some of those in the present National Government, pursuing a Conservative policy, once claimed to be leading the workers against the capitalist coalition—in fact, they have simply led their supporters into the capitalist camp.

The position of leaders, with the adulation it brings, is itself a barrier to their success as levers for working-class emancipation. Apart from the reasons already put forward, there is the constant friction between leaders of which the Press gives

ample evidence at times. They are jealous of each others' popularity, they get huffy at not receiving what they consider a sufficient measure of praise, and anyhow, the prizes to be won bring forward many contestants. Cliques develop which put a barrier around the available jobs, and a great part of the life of each is taken up with this side, instead of pushing the workers' interests.

How prospective leaders view the matter was given startling prominence over twenty years ago. Ruskin College was established to train students for work in the Labour movement. In March, 1909, the students went on strike. They struck because their professors gave sociology and logic a more important place in the curriculum than oratorical exercises! (*Westminster Gazette*, March 30th, 1909.)

While some leaders succeed in retaining a hold on their followers for many years, others are less fortunate. The battle-cry of the old leader is often outdone by that of a newcomer, and the popular idol of one day disappears and is replaced by another to follow the same path. In the Communist movement, for example, leader follows leader with bewildering frequency, and each appears to bring with him a new slogan that involves a new policy. While action by the mass of workers depends upon leaders and leaders depend upon masses there is bound to be this instability.

Mussolini, Hitler and Mosley are glaring examples of the craze for the spectacular that is generally a great part of the make-up of leaders. Extravagant denunciation and extravagant promises impossible of fulfilment are also part of their general stock-in-trade.

A glance at the various political movements inspired by working-class distress in this country shows what a large part the personal feelings of leaders have played. The Labour Party, the old Social Democratic Party, the Communist Party, have all been rent and full of turmoil due in great part to these feuds between leaders. Long ago, H. M. Hyndmann, who was not dependent upon politics for his living, resigned from the Social Democratic Federation in a huff because he would not tolerate criticism of his dictatorial ways. His worshippers ate much humble pie in order to persuade him back into the fold again.

What is probably the chief evil of leadership is the way it dulls the critical faculties of those who rely upon it. When people habitually rely upon others to solve their difficulties they are loth to go to the trouble themselves of thinking out problems. They expect the leaders to do the thinking, and when awkward situations develop they have lost the capacity to appreciate the fact. As they have relied on the leaders to bring success they blame them for failure. Repeated failure



develops apathy, and the feeling that success is impossible.

As the actions of leaders are limited by the outlook of the majority of the workers, it would be necessary for the majority to understand the

position clearly in order that the leaders might act effectively. But when the majority do understand what is required they will no longer need leaders to tell them what to do.

GILMAC.

## More About Roosevelt's "New Deal"

An important element in the N.R.A. is the provision in Section 7a: "That employees shall have the right to organise and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and shall be free from the interference, restraint, or coercion of employers of labour, or their agents, in the designation of such representatives or in self-organisation. . . ."

The N.R.A. was, of course, framed in such a way as to seem to uphold the prevailing American myth that the interests of capitalists and workers are, at bottom, one and the same. Certainly, Roosevelt, in several broadcast speeches, has attacked certain unnamed, selfish capitalists, who wickedly exploited their workers, but he has made it clear that these are an insignificant minority, that the great mass of employers are thoroughly fairminded, sound at heart and good Americans to the core. The American Federation of Labour has always officially accepted this absurdly false view of capitalism, and so its leaders saw nothing anti-working class in offering the N.R.A. the fullest co-operation. They openly gloried at the chance to obtain for the first time in American history a sort of quasi-official status for themselves and their organisations.

Under the stimulus of what seemed to be benign encouragement from the President himself, there began a period of intensified activity on the part of the labour unions, and a great drive for membership. Within a few months millions of workers had been recruited, raising the number of organised from about 2½ millions in January, 1933, to around 5 millions in May of this year. Optimism filled the breasts of the unionised workers and their sympathisers amongst the Liberal Radicals. However, within a few months it was clear that the "collective bargaining" guarantee was to have very different consequences from those expected by Roosevelt's worshippers.

The interpretation of "Section 7a" has led to the bitterest conflict between the unions and employers, more particularly in the Steel and Automobile industries, which have for many years maintained an "open-shop," anti-union policy with the strongest persistence. Alarmed at the great strides in unionism, and determined to brook no interference from outside organisations, the great capitalist concerns in these and other industries

have insisted and acted upon the assumption that "company unions," largely financed and controlled by themselves, properly complied with the provisions of the N.R.A.

The A.F. of L. has repeatedly urged the Government to come out uncompromisingly in support of the workers' "rights" under the N.R.A. and against the "open-shop" and company unions. But, as was to be expected, the Government spokesmen, though making rhetorical speeches, apparently favourable to the workers, have sat on the fence on this question, neither daring nor desiring to break the power of the strongest industrial capitalist groups in the country. In the meantime the organisation of company unions has gone on apace, and they now embrace several millions of employees. It is certain that in granting their workers an unsolicited 10 per cent. wage advance recently, the Steel and Auto industries were motivated chiefly by the desire to win over their workers to the company union idea.

The N.R.A. has greatly strengthened the employing class for industrial conflict with the workers. The advantages which they normally possess have been enhanced by the almost complete organisation by industry which the N.R.A. automatically gives them. The workers, on the other hand, are for the most part unorganised. Even after their recent growth the labour unions only embrace about one-tenth of the total number of workers. For purposes of genuine collective bargaining the growing company unions are sheer fakes, having limited "rights" of negotiation, but no means of applying adequate pressure on the employers. In the April, 1934, issue of "The Nation's Business," issued by the United States Chamber of Commerce, the chief advantage of company unions over trades unions from the capitalist point of view was stated quite frankly: "The company union does not affiliate in any manner with organisations outside that industry, and generally not outside the operations of a single employer. The employers demand this aloofness or isolation, because its abandonment would mean the strength of alliance for his employees and the ability of his employees to have counsel not dependent upon that company's pay roll."

In the numerous strikes that have occurred during the last year a dominant motive has been

the desire of the workers to enforce union recognition, which many had naively assumed to be settled once and for all with the coming of N.R.A. In the main, the A.F. of L. leaders have co-operated with the N.R.A. authorities through the Labour Boards in efforts to persuade strikers to return to work on the strength of promises. Where persuasion has been ineffective and the strikes have been prolonged, the State forces have, in the manner usual to pre-N.R.A. days, been used against the struggling workers. The following brief, vivid digest hardly suggests that the workers under the benign wings of the Blue Eagle are on the verge of a millennium:—

"The *New York Sun* reported in November that 1,176 policemen were on continuous strike duty, the highest number on record in the department. In the Pittsburgh area the great steel, coal and automobile companies have struck back at their militant workers with the use of armed thugs, barrages of tear and bombing gas and lead. In the coal fields of central Illinois there have been beatings and lawless raids by armed men. In New Mexico the State militia was brought in to break the coal strike, led by the left wing National Miners' Union, and strike leaders were tried by drumhead court martials. In the fruit and cotton strikes, under radical leadership, in the San Joaquin Valley in California, night riders have terrorised Filipino workers; Mexican workers have been threatened with the bull pen and deportation; men have been kept in jail without trial for weeks and then their cases dismissed for want of evidence. The American Civil Liberties Union reports that more than 15 strikers have been killed, 200 injured and hundreds arrested since July 1st, and that more than 40 sweeping injunctions have been issued against workers." (*The Social Questions Bulletin*, February, 1934.)

The source of the above quotation is interesting as indicating the intense interest in economic and especially in "labour" questions that four years of depression and the world situation have developed in this country even in the most unlikely quarters. The *Bulletin* is issued by The Methodist Federation for Social Service.

With the industrial improvement of the past few months has come a rising wave of capitalist criticism directed at the N.R.A. One business house after another has attacked the administration, claiming that its measures are strangling rather than helping recovery. A growing number of capitalists now regret their panicky stampede of a year ago. At that time, as Mrs. Roosevelt in a recent address put it with, shall we say, a little dramatic licence, "Industrial leaders were coming to the government at Washington and saying: 'Take our business and run it for us.'" Now, with the first whiff of revival, she complains of their eagerness to throw off all government interference.

In a summary of the reports of over one hundred local organisations of the Chamber of Commerce throughout the country it is stated that, "There was a large group of complaints about unequal consideration for employers and employees, with so much favour to the latter as to cause dis-

turbances, the effect of which upon recovery locally was feared." (*New York Times*, May 1st, 1934.) We have indeed seen how thoroughly the philanthropic policies of the N.R.A. have "favoured" the workers!

The heads of the N.R.A. are wide awake to the rising tide of opposition, and prominent Democrats (who will have to fight the forthcoming elections on the strength of the "vast benefits" the recovery administration has brought to the "common man") are replying to the attacks with vigour. One class of attack, as, for instance, the much publicised report of the committee headed by Clarence Darrow, claim that the N.R.A. is fostering monopoly and strangling the small business man. There is obviously much truth in this, for by their very nature the clauses in the codes limiting competition mean the virtual suspension of the so-called anti-trust laws. There is abundant evidence that many big industrial concerns which may have strong objections to the labour clauses in the N.R.A. very decidedly approve of the standardisation of trade practices under the control of self-governing trade associations which the code system provides. From the first, prominent industrialists have been solidly behind the "New Deal," and have held high official posts in its administration. Charles M. Schwab, head of the Iron and Steel Institute, has declared, "The action of the automobile, textile and other industries in formulating and executing their various codes is . . . the great practical result which has been accomplished thus far. The principles which they adopted are in line with what we have advocated and hoped for over these many years." (*N.Y. Times*, May 25th, 1934.) The *Nation*, which dubs the Steel Code the Magna Charta of Monopoly, points out that "plural voting based upon volume of sales is such as to ensure control by two or three largest steel producers." "Price cutting loopholes of almost every conceivable variety have been foreseen and corked up." (May 23rd.)

By the usual irony of history the swarms of petty and middling capitalists who rushed to the support of Roosevelt during his campaign, and who were, according to the rousing speeches of the New Dealers, to be amongst the chief beneficiaries of the recovery programme, are now turning out to be its victims. Many of them must be bitterly wondering if after all they have been but pawns in the game of the powerful interests. They, along with millions of disillusioned workers, will be ready material for the next swing of the political pendulum.

In the old traditional manner, the New Deal is being attacked and defended by appeals to the historical sentiment of the electorate, to their supposed attachment to the ideal embodied in the "glorious constitution." Ogden L. Mills, cabinet member with Hoover, thunders the awful warning



that "the New Deal conflicts with the fundamental principles upon which our government is founded, and to the extent that its philosophy overrides or supplants them it is a revolutionary one." (*N.Y. Times*, May 20th.) On the other side of the fence, Richberg, legal counsel for the N.R.A., glowingly proclaims the N.R.A. to be a "counter revolutionary movement definitely and deliberately designed to perpetuate our American institutions and instrumentalities of individual liberty and self-government." (*N.Y. Times*, May 13th.)

All signs point to the developing of a first-class political fight in the near future. Many conflicting capitalist interests are involved, and the form of industrial regulation eventually adopted will necessarily be a compromise between the differing sections. It is impossible to forecast the outcome with any assurance. Much depends on the degree of industrial recovery reached. To any considerable revival of foreign trade there are many obstacles, of which the great growth of artificial trade barriers is only one. Any serious attempt to reorganise American agriculture and manufactures on more nationally self-sufficient lines will entail vast and destructive conflicts, arousing readjustments including the scaling down by government aid of the industries built up primarily on an export basis.

The N.R.A. is involved in a tangle of antagonisms and contradictions. These are a product of the normal development of capitalism the world over. The Socialist does not say that the trends of capitalism cannot be hastened or slowed down by legislative measures, but he does emphatically declare that such modifications are slight and that the general problems of the system can neither be overcome nor circumvented by such methods. This is not to say that America has not now reached a new stage in its evolution, an epoch of still more highly monopolistic and centralised and state regulated capitalism that will bring special problems of its own.

One thing can certainly be said of future developments—that, whatever they may bring, the workers will continue to get the worst of the bargain until they cease to be deluded by the red herring of reform, by attempts to patch up capitalism, and until they unite for the only programme that can solve their problems—the abolition of the whole rotten system itself and the establishment of Socialism.

Though there is abundant discontent, and though the Communists, with their usual cock-eyed vision, profess to see "a revolutionary upsurge stirring the American masses," there is in actual fact a lack of class-consciousness and an abundance of the most confused thinking amongst the workers. This, to a Socialist, is lamentable—but understandable. Economic developments are producing conditions that make the case for

Socialism more strikingly clear than was possible in the past era of rampant individualism, and collectivistic ideas of sorts are floating around and being discussed in the most unlikely circles. But in the building up of a sound and powerful party of Socialists, for which The Workers' Socialist Party affords a nucleus, a very great amount of work remains to be done, and must be done. If you are interested, fellow worker, study our principles. If you are convinced, join our ranks.

R. W. H.

## Suicidal Glory

The *Labour Monthly*, one of the organs of the Communist Party, has secured (June issue) Georgi Dimitrov as one of its contributors. He writes a "Letter to the Austrian Workers," with the intention of drawing from the recent commotions in Vienna and elsewhere "historical lessons . . . for the workers of all capitalist countries."

The March issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD ("Austrian Workers' Tragic Heroism") dealt with the same topic with a similar intention; incidentally its audience of "workers" would include those of the State—Russia—that is issuing 7 per cent. Bonds, employing the most up-to-date methods of extracting the last ounce of work in its industrial enterprises, vigorously suppressing freedom of speech, and "dictating" by a comparatively small clique to a huge mass of unconvinced peasants and others who form the main bulk of the U.S.S.R.

Dimitrov, in the style peculiar to the Communist Party—a derivation from the bourgeois heroics of the French Revolution period—says: "The U.S.S.R. stands firm like a rock . . . the power of the working-class has been established. . . ." Instead of which, as the March SOCIALIST STANDARD reminds us: "In spite of the Russian Government's pose that it is the defender of the working class everywhere, it appears to have maintained an attitude of correct diplomatic neutrality."

Let us be clear upon one point: The Socialist Party of Great Britain and its allied organisations in the Dominions and the U.S.A. yield to none in admiration of courageous resistance on the part of the working class at all times and in all places. "We were moved to admiration by the heroic resistance of the Austrian workers . . . their conduct is a proof that the working class can produce men as tenacious and possessed of as much endurance and integrity as anything the ruling class can show." (March SOCIALIST STANDARD.)

But, the key-word to the Socialist Party's position on this question is contained in the heading of the article referred to: "Austrian Workers' Tragic Heroism."

And here emerges our unbridgable difference with Dimitrov—whose personal qualities the S.P. would be the last to belittle; his courageous avowal of political intent under appalling circumstances compare very favourably with the pettifogging lines of defence adopted by members of the English Communist Party when before the representatives of British law and order, under distinctly less harassing conditions.

Dimitrov holds, with the S.P.G.B., that the struggle was tragic, but why? Because "it was not the armed struggle of the Austrian working class that was a mistake. The mistake was that the struggle was not organised and LED in a revolutionary Bolshevik way."

"Trust your leaders." . . . History stands aghast, while the crucified working class, gazing into the intense inane, utters its despairing cry, "My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?" And from Communist and Labour Party circles a voice replies, "What we want is honest leadership."

Turn here to our Declaration of Principles: "EMANCIPATION MUST BE THE WORK OF THE WORKING CLASS ITSELF."

Dimitrov charges the Social Democrats with incompetence and treachery. The Socialist Party of Great Britain through thirty years has adduced proof after proof of the utter inability of any party not broad-based upon Socialist UNDERSTANDING to compass emancipation.

The Social Democrats of Austria, the Communist Party of this country, ALL parties outside the Socialist Party of Great Britain and its allied parties, are out for REFORM. The question of "treachery" is irrelevant. The March article in the SOCIALIST STANDARD summarised the situation:—"The Social Democrats had to tell their followers that housing schemes and various other little gains were vital inroads into capitalism, and must be defended at all costs. Consequently, when the Government finally made a frontal attack on the Vienna Council, the Social Democrats had either to fight or else admit that these things were not worth fighting for."

A real, practical and immediate danger lurks under the froth and scum of the anarchist section of reform (mainly represented by the C.P. and I.L.P.). Whether temporarily posturing as a "United Front," or vulgarly abusing each other, they are directly responsible for urging ill-fed and unarmed workers to pit themselves against the batons of the police and the machine guns of the military. We are living on the edge of desperate happenings. Vienna can be re-enacted here. (Good old George, dear old Christian George Lansbury, has planned under "Labour" Government to "protect public services." See *Clarion*, May 5th, this year, so that the Labour Party can hardly be charged with "treachery" if the revered "leader" wields the stick heavily.) What hope

can the English section of the Communist Party hold out that "the gigantic stronghold of the working class of the world" (Dimitrov) will aid the proletariat in insurrection?

Fellow workers, is it "worth while for a workers' movement to go down in suicidal glory for the sake of the nominal control of part of the machinery of local government?"

With an alleged "Socialist" L.C.C. on the Embankment, and an organisation (relying in the long run upon secret methods) fishing in troubled waters, the question may not be so remote or academic as it sounds at first.

A. REGINALD.

### Bloomsbury Branch.

On September 3rd, Mr. A. MacLaren, of the English League for the Taxation of Land Values, will state the aims and objects of his organisation. Party members will reply.

### "The Socialist Review."

The Socialist Party of New Zealand is now publishing its organ, the *Socialist Review*. Copies are obtainable from T. J. Phillips, 16, Hawea Road, Point Chevalier, Auckland, W.3.

### Ilford Branch.

A Branch has now been established in Ilford and for the present will meet each Monday, 8 p.m., at 13b, Richmond Road, Ilford. Branch business and discussion. Will sympathisers in and around Ilford communicate with Secretary, H. S. Greenwood, at above address. Open-air Propaganda Meeting held every Friday, 8 p.m., Station Road, opp. L.N.E.R. Station, Ilford.

### "The Western Socialist"

The Socialist Party of Canada is now publishing a Journal, "The Western Socialist." Copies are obtainable from the Socialist Party of Canada, Manitoba Hotel, 194, Market Avenue East, Winnipeg, at five cents a copy; or at 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, at 2d. per copy (2½d. post free).

### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We regret that several answers to correspondents are crowded out of this issue and will appear in a later issue. ED. COMM.

## RAMBLE

### ON AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY

A ramble will take place from  
LEATHERHEAD to RANMORE,  
over the Surrey Downs.

Meet on Waterloo Station near platform 1 at  
10 a.m. Fare 2/3 return.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

AUGUST,



1934

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

### TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Twelve Months, post free .. .. .	2s. 6d.
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## The German Slaughterhouse

When Hitler was fighting for power in Germany one of the most important of the planks in his platform was the routing out of what he called Marxism, which was joined by him to the Jewish question. He professed to be out for the abolition of class warfare and the clearing away of class-consciousness, and all that it implied.

After Hitler and his party had obtained control of political power they proceeded to make good their promises. The German Social Democratic Party, the Communist Party, and all those groups professing adherence to Marx's views, were smashed up. As the Jews were also supposed to be tainted with Communism, along with other alleged vices, a determined campaign was organised for their suppression, and appears to have met with considerable success.

All the writings of Marx and those writings of others that were officially considered to be tainted with Marxism, were banned, and in some instances destroyed by public bonfires carried out in the spirit of the earlier Aryans, who sought to silence the wisdom of the Greek philosophers in a similar way, but then in the name of the Jewish Christ.

In the fulness of time we were assured that Hitler and his supporters had conquered, that the deadly views of Marxism had been destroyed, that peace and contentment had come to the German nation, who were now at last united in a desire to bring to birth a new and powerful people built upon new foundations, and worshipping at the shrine of some pagan or oriental deity. General Goering bellowed this good news at many public meetings—and threatened with dire penalties any who denied it.

Into these idyllic conditions, like a bolt from the blue, came the news of the ruthless shooting by the Government of those who were formerly at the head of the Nazi movement. It is interesting to notice that those who were killed were not turncoats from the Communist or Social Democratic Parties, but were full-blooded supporters of the National Socialist Party, without any suspicion of a Marxian taint, as is shown by Hitler's defence of the shootings.

The single-minded ruthlessness of the summary executions is evidenced by the shooting of the wife of Von Schleicher.

The way in which the holocaust was organised shows the premeditated character of the slayings, which are evidently calculated to strike fear into the opponents of Hitler. Hitler himself triumphantly takes the responsibility saying, according to the report of his speech in the Reichstag:—

"I gave the order to shoot, as only ruthless and bloody intervention could have stopped the revolt.

"I myself was the Supreme Court of the German people for this 24 hours." (*News-Chronicle*, July 14th.

How many were killed is not known, but Hitler, in the speech just mentioned, states that number was 77. An example of the type of people attracted to the Hitler movement is also given by his statement that three S.S. men (his own trusted body-guard) were shot for "shamefully mishandling prisoners"—an ominous remark.

After the so-called incipient revolt had been quelled there occurred an event which is worth pondering over by those who believe in the unshackled power of dictators. Hitler called the Reichstag together in order to explain to them the nature and the reason for his action. It is true that the Reichstag is a "packed" body, but even so, it is of considerable significance that Hitler who, in his own words is "Germany," should yet have considered it necessary to explain and defend his action before a body elected, however corruptly, by the German people or, to put it another way, a body which claims to represent the will of the people.

If Marxism brought class warfare into German life what can be said of a movement that turns in upon itself and slaughters its own votaries? It shows how such movements demand terrorist measures like these in order to ensure the continuance of leaders who have climbed up with support of terrorism.

As usual, the self-styled promoters of "peace upon earth and goodwill towards men" hastened to make their voices heard. The Evangelical Bishop of Hessen-Nassau, Dr. Dietrich, sent the following telegram (a letter might not have been quick enough!) to Hitler:—

"Thanks for strong liberating action. Congratulations. Renewed vows unswerving loyalty. Praying God's help for beloved Fuhrer." (*News-Chronicle*, July 9th.)

What lies behind the curtain in Germany it is

not easy to gather. But it appears to be fairly evident that the work of destroying opposition to normal capitalist procedure having been accomplished, powerful industrialists want to curb the activities of the extremists in the National Socialist movement.

It is certainly significant that two "leaders" of German economic life appointed by the Nazis in pursuance of their scheme for introducing the leader principle in business, have recently been removed. Dr. Kessler, the Nazi engineer, who has been acting as Dictator of Industry, and Dr. A. Pietsch, the leader of the Chemical industry, are the people in question. It is alleged that the resignation of Dr. Kessler was the result of pressure exerted by the Trust Ring, including Herr Krupp von Bohlen, Dr. Fritz Thyssen and Herr Vogler, all of Essen, who want to see an end put to State intervention in their business.

## "The Great God Waste"

We have received a letter from Mr. J. L. Hodgson criticising the review of his book that appeared in our July issue. Mr. Hodgson's letter is given below, followed by our comments:—

Eggington,

Beds.

July 7th, 1934.

Dear Sir,

In the review of my book, "The Great God Waste," which appears in your current issue, your reviewer takes me to task for not doing things

which I did not set out to do (such as evaluating precisely the productive power of modern industry), and accuses me of making statements which I did not make (such as that there is an absolute deficiency of purchasing

power; that there was no poverty problem before 1844; that because a bootmaker, working with a machine, can turn out ten times as many boots as was possible by hand, the productivity of the boot-making industry as a whole has been multiplied by ten; that "specialists" and "experts" are better fitted than other people to handle the poverty problem; and so on.

In so doing he completely misses the main argument of those portions of my book with which he more especially attempts to deal. This argument is that in a society which is mainly controlled by maintaining a condition of impoverishment, vast Communal Wastes must necessarily fritter away most of the Industrial Savings effected by the engineer and his co-workers.

Among what I have called the Communal Wastes I instance such things as mass unemployment, strikes, resentment and lack of zeal on the part of the workers; the various obstructive activities of vested interests; our curious habit of digging up gold at great expense and then reburying it as quickly as possible in bank vaults; most advertising activities; most of the activities of middlemen; the sabotage of factories; agricultural lands, raw materials and manufactured goods in order to restrict production and maintain prices; at least half of our foreign export of goods, for which—

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.**

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



owing to the default of our debtors, and to other causes—we are never repaid in goods; the refusal to accept reparations in kind; most ticket-collecting, taxation and book-keeping activities; most wars and the preparation for wars; unnecessarily inadequate bodily and mental health; starved education; many forms of unnecessarily complex or ostentatious living, and so on.

If your readers or your reviewer will attempt even roughly to evaluate such Communal Wastes as I have indicated, they will begin to realise from a new angle the immense waste of actual or potential productivity of really desirable things.

Whether this waste is two or ten times the productivity that we are actually permitted to enjoy is of little moment beside the more vital problem of considering how we may reorganise society so that men may have economic and mental freedom, and how they may enjoy the abundance which we engineers, and those who work with us, are so surely able to create.

I suspect that your reviewer's virulent objection to my book—he calls it a thoroughly bad book—is because he resents the idea that the potential productivity of modern industry and technique is more than adequate to raise the standard of living of all to a satisfactory level without necessarily reducing the standards of those who have already achieved high levels.

His amusing suggestion that some fifty people as effective as I claim to be would explain the whole of the unemployment problem in this country does not take into account the re-absorption of many of the unemployed in communally wasteful activities. For instance, during the past few months cheap goods from abroad have been prevented from coming in. There has also been an increase in the manufacture of war materials, and a recrudescence of shipbuilding (in spite of the fact that we have a vast tonnage laid up), and so on.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN L. HODGSON.

P.S.—I enclose a Broadcast Talk, which may further infuriate your reviewer.

#### Reply.

Mr. Hodgson states that the review of his book, published in the July SOCIALIST STANDARD, took him to task for not "evaluating precisely the productive power of modern industry." This statement is absolutely erroneous. What the review charged against Mr. Hodgson was not that he failed to evaluate productivity *precisely*, but that he has not the remotest idea of the level productivity has reached, or of the rate at which it increases, and that his so-called evidences are utterly irrelevant, proving nothing one way or the other.

We say, for example, that Mr. Hodgson's statement, that "wealth and amenities do not

increase one-tenth as fast as they would do if the hidden leaks could be discovered and stopped" (p. 14), and his further statement that "the effect of the leaks . . . more than doubled" during a recent period of a few months (*ibid.*) are grossly untrue, and are, moreover, utterly unsupported by a tittle of real evidence in his book. They are just childish guesses, clearly indicating that the author is not competent to write on the subject at all.

It is obvious, too, that he has not grasped the fact that the question of what is to be regarded as waste cannot be separated from the form of the particular social system in relation to which the problem is being considered. The necessities of one social system become redundant in a different one.

Mr. Hodgson's superficiality can be seen from a passage in his present letter, where he describes as forms of "communal waste" the export of goods for which other goods are not received in exchange, and also the refusal to accept reparations in kind. These two passages gloss over the fact that goods (whether export goods or reparations) do not belong to society as a whole; and the world is not made poorer or richer by the ability of the capitalists in one country to get goods for nothing from the capitalists in another country.

Dealing with the question of the deficiency or otherwise of purchasing power, Mr. Hodgson says, in his present letter, that he did not allege an absolute deficiency of purchasing power. It is true that he nowhere states so in those words, but that he has (or had) that idea can reasonably be assumed from his proposal (p. 49) that "Purchasing Power must be distributed as a gift," and his approving reference on page 46 to Major Douglas, whose whole conception is based on the fallacious assumption of an absolute deficiency of purchasing power. However, if Mr. Hodgson holds no such view, then his proposal to distribute purchasing power as a gift must mean taking it away from those who have it and giving it to those who lack it; in other words, the useless and dangerous panacea of the Labour Party and other believers in "redistributing wealth," while retaining capitalism, that is, while retaining the system whose very basis is monopoly by the few and propertylessness for the many.

Mr. Hodgson denies saying that there was no poverty problem before 1844. Then may we ask what the following statement means?

" . . . Credit Power—the right to grant or withhold the permission and encouragement to do and to use things—must be widely diffused throughout the community, as it was in the days of the banks of private issue" (p. 45). (Our italics.)

(Elsewhere (p. 29) Mr. Hodgson has given as the date when the banks of private issue were abolished, the year 1844.)

The reference to boot-making in our review consisted of the criticism that Mr. Hodgson's statements tell us nothing whatever about increasing

productivity. It will be observed that Mr. Hodgson, in his letter, carefully avoids dealing with this point. Here is another of his statements. We challenge him to tell us what (if anything) it means. "The modern Industrial Efficiencies are exemplified . . . by brickmaking plants, which enable *one man* to produce many thousands of bricks a day."

Mr. Hodgson denies that he considers "specialists" and "experts" better fitted than other people to handle the poverty problem. What, then, does he mean by his own description of his Chapter VI, worded as follows (see footnote on p. 4):—

"This chapter suggests that the highly industrialised countries, with their complex organisations, can only change over to the New Order when the specialists and experts, whose skill and knowledge make these complex organisations possible, see the necessity for the change."

As regards Mr. Hodgson's general observations on waste, these (to the extent that they are valid) have always been familiar to Socialists, and are, for example, dealt with in our pamphlet, "Socialism."

Mr. Hodgson blandly assures us that, "Whether this waste is two or ten times the productivity that we are actually permitted to enjoy is of little moment beside the more vital problem of conceding how we may reorganise society so that men may have economic and mental freedom . . . etc."

With regard to the first point, it is of vital importance that the Socialist case should be based upon truth, arrived at by the use of scientific methods. It cannot be built up on the kind of unscientific guesses in which Mr. Hodgson indulges.

With regard to the second part, it is impossible to separate the solution from the true or false conceptions by means of which it is reached. Because Mr. Hodgson's "facts" are almost wholly false, he arrives at the fantastic "solution" which consists of leaving almost untouched the cause of the poverty problem (*viz.*, the capitalist ownership and control of the means of production and distribution) and concentrating on distributing purchasing power as a gift, making the bankers the servants of "planning bodies," and similar useless measures. Socialists, because their case has a firm foundation, propound the only solution; which is to make the means of production and distribution the common property of society as a whole, to be used by society to produce goods for the use of the members of society.

We do not propose to follow Mr. Hodgson in the guesses by which he attempts to explain the dislikes which he (Mr. Hodgson) believes he can discern in the mind of the reviewer. It is this habit of guessing at supposed facts and then constructing fantastic explanations of them of which we complain in Mr. Hodgson's book.

H.

## This "Age of Plenty"

A correspondent (Jacobus, Herne Bay) writes as follows:—

"This is declared to be an age of plenty, but there does not seem to be much sign of it. Can you say what means will have to be adopted so that all can share in the plenty? Will the State have to devise the means?"

#### Reply.

The phrase "Age of Plenty" has been popularised in recent times chiefly by the American "Technocrats" and the followers of Major Douglas. It is also used by Sir Oswald Mosley on the one hand, and by sections of the Labour Party and I.L.P. on the other. The meaning they attach to it is that there has recently been a stupendous increase in the powers of production, resulting from machinery and other improvements, and that it only requires some modification of the monetary system to enable those powers to be utilised, thus supplying plenty for everybody with a negligible expenditure of labour and without interfering with the essentials of the capitalist system of society. In this sense the notion of an "Age of Plenty" is almost wholly false. In addition it is exceedingly dangerous, since the acceptance of it turns attention away from the real problem facing the working class, and from the solution to that problem. For example, one conclusion arrived at by the Douglasites is that machinery is rapidly reducing to a negligible quantity the need for human labour in production. Therefore, say the Douglasites, there will soon be no working class, all will be unemployed, thus destroying the very basis of the working-class movement. Anyone who accepts this false argument will naturally come to believe that the possibility of the conquest of political power by a Socialist working class has also been destroyed. For these and other reasons the believers in an "Age of Plenty" necessarily find themselves on the side of the opponents of Socialism.

The true position can be summed up as follows. From the point of view of what would be possible under common ownership the present powers of production are to a large extent wasted, the waste showing itself in the voluntary idleness of many able-bodied persons whose property incomes enable them to live without working, in the compulsory idleness of the unemployed, the waste of competition and advertising, the waste of armaments, and the maintenance of armed forces, etc., etc. This aspect of capitalism has been known to Socialists ever since the beginnings of the Socialist movement. The question is gone into in our pamphlet, "Socialism," where it is shown that as regards the technical conditions of production, the volume of wealth produced could be approximately doubled if these various forms of waste were eliminated.



But how can they be eliminated? Only the Socialist can provide the answer. It is impossible to eliminate this waste until capitalism itself has been abolished. The waste arises naturally and inevitably out of capitalism; it is not accidental. Unemployment under capitalism is a necessity to the running of industry on a profit-making basis. The rivalry of interests of national groups of capitalists inevitably produces the danger of war and therefore necessitates the maintenance of armed forces. Likewise capitalism, by the stigma it attaches to work, will always encourage members of the propertied class to cultivate idleness and non-productive occupations.

Under capitalism the capitalist class own and control the means of production and distribution and there is no way whatsoever of getting those means utilised for "production for use" instead of "production for profit," except by first taking them out of the ownership and control of the capitalists and making them the common property of society as a whole. That can only be done by a Socialist majority first obtaining control of the machinery of government, including the armed forces. When that has been achieved, the world's powers of production will be utilised to the full, freed from the wastes and hindrances of capitalism. Even so, there will still be no question of an "Age of Plenty," as envisaged by the Douglasites and others, for their fantastic visions of productivity already increasing tenfold and a hundred-fold are the result of ignorant misreading of the facts before them. Human labour has not been ousted by machinery; productivity increases very slowly indeed, and although under Socialism all sorts of barriers will have been removed, the powers of production as they exist at present will not by any means suffice to enable the world to live without work, as is the fallacious belief of many who use the term "Age of Plenty." H.

### "SOCIALISM"

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\* \* \* \* \*

### WALTHAMSTOW.

LECTURES will be given at Workmen's Hall (Room 2),  
82, High Street, Walthamstow.

August 8th	.. "Nemesis"	.. C. Lestor
" 22nd	.. "Parliament"	.. Russell
Admission Free.	Commence at 8 p.m.	Questions and discussion

## Fascists and Communists

We have received the following letter criticising a statement contained in our July editorial:—

Clapham, S.W.4.

Editorial Committee.

July 3rd, 1934.

Dear Comrades,

Re Editorial, July issue, 1934, referring to Blackshirt meeting at Olympia, I am astonished when you say that they, i.e., members of the audience, "only got what they asked for," surely this should not be the considered expression of a Socialist organisation when referring to members of an audience who make slight interruptions. It is apparent from eye witnesses' accounts (see *Daily Herald*, June 9th, 1934) that interruptors were brutally treated; you put it rather mildly when you say they were "roughly handled," for people to be knocked unconscious, then kicked.

Even, as you say, that "those who went to the Fascist meeting with the intention of creating disorder and making the meeting impossible," that is no justification for the excessive violence that was used in removing interruptors, and for you to say (I cannot help repeating) that they "got what they asked for" is beyond my comprehension. What an amazing expression. I am sorry to see such expressions appearing in SOCIALIST STANDARD.

The remainder of article I am in perfect agreement. Yours faithfully, T. W. C.

Reply.

In the first place we think that our correspondent has misunderstood somewhat the meaning of the passage he criticises.

Among the audience at Mosley's meeting at Olympia on June 7th there were a large number of people who went there simply to hear what Mosley had to say. Among this section of the audience there were some who did what is customary at public meetings, they made interruptions of the kind not usually objected to by public speakers. There were others at the meeting who quite obviously went there for the deliberate purpose of creating disorder and making the meeting impossible. It was of these latter and not the former that we said they "only got what they asked for, and have no reason to complain if they were roughly handled."

That does not mean, as our correspondent thinks, that we approve of the violence of the Fascists who organised the meeting, or that we consider that the amount of violence they used was not excessive for the purpose of putting out the interruptors.

We strongly disapprove of all violence used in political discussion, because we know that, no matter from what quarter it comes, it is harmful to the working class and to Socialism. The

capitalists use their control of the machinery of government, including the armed forces, to suppress working class resistance. That that is contrary to working class interests needs no arguing. Fascists, under the usual pretence of promoting the welfare of "the public," or even the interests of the workers themselves, are prepared to use violence at their meetings, probably because they believe it has some value to them as an advertisement. That violence, wielded by an organisation which stands for capitalism, is every bit as harmful to working class interests as is the violence used by other defenders of capitalism.

Lastly, we have the Communists and others preaching civil war, advocating armed revolt and street fighting, and boasting of their activities in the direction of organised interference with public meetings of all kinds. Every one of these forms of violence is directly and unqualifiedly anti-working-class in its effects, even although those who are responsible for it believe that they are helping the workers thereby. Violence of this kind is harmful because it distracts the attention of the workers from the real problems of winning over the majority to Socialism and of capturing the machinery of government; because it gives the capitalists an excuse to suppress Socialist propaganda and to drive organisation underground; and because it prevents the workers from hearing and considering either the merits of the Socialist case or the hollowness of the Fascist case.

Those who organise or encourage such activity are to be condemned absolutely from the standpoint of working class interests and Socialism.

ED. COMM.

## The Church and Slums

Some eighteen months ago, public attention was focussed on the Church's activities as ground landlords of large estates, notably one at Paddington, and criticism was very outspoken as to the state of the property. (See *Daily Herald*, January 23rd, 1933, and SOCIALIST STANDARD, June, 1933.)

Speaking of the Church's attitude to the matter at that time, Mr. G. W. Currie, of the Westminster Survey Group, said:

"For three years past every effort has been used to stir the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to take some action in their capacity as ground landlords. It is true they have indicated their willingness to fall in with any improvement scheme that may be started, but nothing has been done." (*Daily Herald*, January 23rd, 1933.)

Apparently since then, some move has been made, perhaps as a result of "misdirected criticism" and "misrepresentation of motive" (i.e., as a result of the limelight), together with "falling in with a scheme" started by someone else, for we learn from the *Daily Chronicle* (January 19th, 1934) that "improvements are put

in hand to the tune of £500,000," and Mr. Geo. Middleton, First Church Estates Commissioner, in a White Paper issued by the Commissioner, says:

"The Commissioners are not slum landlords. They are good and public spirited landlords. They have never pretended that they do not possess property 'no longer satisfactory for family occupation,' but they are always reviewing the state of property in their hands." (*Daily Chronicle*, *ibid.*)

That apathy describes the Church's attitude to all social activities for centuries. In this case they expect 3 per cent. on their outlay, and any more to come, glad of it.

Let Mr. Middleton continue from his White Paper:—

"Their London reconditioning scheme now on hand up to £500,000, is not an act of philanthropy, but an investment of capital in acceptance of the responsibilities of good and enlightened ownership."

And, we learn, "They cannot look for a return of more than 3 per cent."

So we see that they are out on the search for profit, like their patrons, the capitalists, and the grudging nature of the "improvements" they are undertaking can be seen from this further quotation from their White Paper.

"While in the past we have been able to help Public Utility Societies by the investment of their money, or by offering sites on most favourable terms, we cannot at present entertain applications for help of this kind because of the large direct commitments they are undertaking."

The Church, like other property owners, is not a philanthropic body, but exists as regards its income from property upon the exploitation of the workers; as such it upholds the present system. Let any major labour issue crop up, and the Church will usually be found siding with the masters, and any faith or trust imposed on them is, from a working-class standpoint, misplaced. Rather should the workers get to understand their position and organise for Socialism and the abolition of poverty.

C. V. R.

## William Morris Quotations

"We Socialists are often reproached with giving no details of the state of things which would follow on the destruction of that system of waste and war which is sometimes dignified by the lying title of the harmonious combination of capital and labour. . . . To this Socialists answer, and rightly, that we have not set ourselves to build up a system to please our tastes, nor are we seeking to impose it on the world in a mechanical manner, but rather that we are assisting in bringing about a development of history which would take place without our help, but which, nevertheless, compels us to help it; and that, under these circumstances, it would be futile to map out the details of life in a condition of



things so different from that in which we have been born and bred. Those details will be taken care of by the men who will be so lucky as to be born into a society relieved of the oppression which crushes us, and who surely will be, not less, but more prudent and reasonable than we are. Nevertheless, it seems clear that the economical changes which are in progress must be accompanied by corresponding developments of men's aspirations; and the knowledge of their progress cannot fail to rouse our imaginations into picturing for ourselves that life at once happy and manly which we *know* social revolution will put within the reach of all men.

"... Serious occupation, amusing relaxation, and more rest for the leisure of the workers, and withal, that beauty of surroundings, and the power of producing beauty which are sure to be claimed by those who have leisure, education, and serious occupation. No one can say that such things are not desirable for the workers; but we Socialists are striving to make them seem not only desirable but necessary, well knowing that under the present system of society they are impossible of attainment—and why? Because we cannot afford the time, trouble and thought necessary to obtain them. Again, why cannot we? *Because we are at war*, class against class and man against man; all our time is taken up with that. . . . Under such conditions of life labour can but be a terrible burden, degrading to the workers, more degrading to those who live upon their work. This is the system which we seek to overthrow and supplant by one in which labour will no longer be a burden."

(From "A Factory as it Might Be."—1884.)

"Well, I will now let my claims for decent life stand as I have made them. To sum them up in brief, they are: first, a healthy body; second, an active mind in sympathy with the past, the present and the future; thirdly, occupation fit for a healthy body and an active mind; and fourthly, a beautiful world to live in. . . . It is not we who can build up the new social order; the past ages have done the most of that work for us; but we can clear our eyes to the signs of the times, and we shall then see that the attainment of a good condition of life is being made possible for us, and that it is now our business to stretch out our hands to take it. And how? Chiefly, I think, by educating people to a sense of their real capacities as men, so that they may be able to use to their own good the political power which is rapidly being thrust upon them; . . . to get people to see that individual profit-makers are not a necessity for labour, but an obstruction to it. . . . I admit that the work is long and burdensome; . . . people have been made so timorous of change by the terror of starvation

that even the unluckiest of them are stolid and hard to move. Hard as the work is, however, its reward is not doubtful. . . . That claim for equality of condition will be made constantly and with growing loudness till it *must* be listened to, and then at last it will be only a step over the border and the civilised world will be socialised; and, looking back on what has been, we shall be astonished to think of how long we submitted to live as we live now."—(From "How we Live and How we Might Live."—1888.)

## A "Red" Recants

*Preparing for Power.* By J. T. Murphy. Jonathan Cape. 6s.

The author above named obtained a certain amount of notoriety in connection with the shop-stewards' movement during the war. He became a member of the S.L.P., and sat for a while on the executive until expelled along with McManus and others for intriguing with the B.S.P. Mr. Murphy states on page 15 of the above volume that the S.L.P. "merged with the B.S.P." to form the Communist Party. It is pretty common knowledge amongst students of political history during the past twenty years that the S.L.P. maintained a separate existence for several years after the formation of the C.P., and ran its paper, "The Socialist," until 1925 or thereabouts.

After occupying a prominent position in the C.P. the author was expelled from that party about two years ago. Says he: "I therefore determined on a restudy of the history of the working class movement and Marxism. The first result was my decision to join the Labour Party as the mass political party of the workers, to subscribe even to what I regard as errors and mistakes, confident that the dynamics of the class struggle will force the revolutionary changes necessary to the fulfilment of the historic destiny of the working class." Page 16.

He attempts to derive theoretical support for this attitude from the passage in the Communist Manifesto of 1848, which refers to the fact that "the Communists do not form a separate party conflicting with other working class parties." (On page 56 he says this principle conflicts with the present relation of communists to the Labour movement.)

The C.P. have never been consistent in their hostility to the Labour Party, nor is their present attitude based upon any fundamental and revolutionary principle. Nevertheless, it is clear that Murphy has overlooked the point in Engels' preface (quoted from the joint preface to the German edition of 1872) that the political situation has been entirely changed and the progress of history has swept from off the earth the greater

portion of the political parties there enumerated.

In spite of their limited outlook these parties (such as the Chartists in England) at the time appeared to hold prospects of the conquest of political power for revolutionary objects. Nowhere in the course of his book does the author show that the Labour Party has ever given any such hope. On the contrary, he quotes innumerable examples of the utter subservience of the Labour Party to the interests of the capitalist industrialists, mainly of the Liberal stamp.

So long as the workers had to win the franchise it would have been the height of folly for Marx and Engels to have opposed parties having this as their object. This issue once settled, however, the next step was obviously to set on foot the *independent* political party of the working class having Socialism as its conscious object.

Apart from the S.P.G.B. no party fulfils this essential condition of independence, least of all the Labour Party.

Writing of the general strike as a weapon (on page 50) Murphy says: "If it is an action to impose terms, whether economic or political, upon the powers that be, then it means an unarmed proletariat faces an armed State, which must either capitulate or defeat the strike." Compare this with his confident declaration in his pamphlet, "The Revolutionary Workers' Government," written while he was still in the C.P. "The general strike demonstrated before our eyes how the working class comes to power." Page 14.

Reviewing its past associations, Murphy repudiates Industrial Unionism (pages 88-90), and shows that the shop stewards' successes were confined to local issues of minor importance. "Workers' control of industry without workers' ownership of industry is utterly impossible. The change of ownership is a political question, indeed the outstanding political question of our time" (page 159); and he says on the same page that "the central question of the conquest of political power by the working class was entirely overlooked. The shop stewards did not discuss it."

Mr. Murphy is far from having shed all his illusions. He still clings to the notion that Socialism is being built up in Russia (page 69), and objects to the clause in the preamble of the First International (drawn up by Marx) which declares "that the emancipation of labour . . . depends upon the concurrence, practical and theoretical, of the most advanced countries." This he describes as "a point of view which was completely disproved by the Russian Revolution in 1917." Yet, strange to say, he makes the following confession on page 201: Referring to the second congress of the Third International, held in Moscow during July, 1920, he says: "The writer participated in this congress and was party to its decisions. Thirteen years have passed.

Looking back over the experience of these years it appears clear to him that there was an over-estimation of the rapidity of the development of the world revolution and a consequent under-estimation of the strength of the leaders of the Second International in many countries. . . . At the time of the congress itself the revolutionary wave that had swept Europe had already passed its zenith and nobody recognised the fact."

Mr. Murphy means, of course, nobody in the Communist Party. The S.P.G.B. repeatedly stressed the point that no world revolution was possible without a Socialist working class. Mr. Murphy, however, regarded the S.P.G.B. as a "counter-revolutionary" body in 1930. It would be interesting to learn how he regards them now that he has succeeded in persuading Sir Stafford Cripps (God bless him!) to write an introduction to his book. For another illusion which he has not shed is his faith in leaders. "Changes in the leadership of the Labour movement from bottom to top is thus the all-important issue," says he on page 285. One can readily understand why it is all-important to Mr. Murphy.

E. B.

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Finsbury Park ...	5.30 p.m.	Goldstein. Turner.	Godfrey. Isbitsky.	Ambridge.	Ambridge.
Victoria Park ...	6 p.m.	Kohn. Innes.	Jacobs. Ambridge.	Cash.	Cash.
Brockwell Park ...	6 p.m.	Rubin. Lestor.	Russell. Kohn.	Innes.	Innes.
Queen's Road, Bayswater, near Whiteley's ...	7.30 p.m.	Turner. Ambridge.	Waters. Reginald.	Turner.	Turner.
Cock Hotel, East Ham ...	7.30 p.m.	Innes. Butler.	Ambridge. Russell.	Lestor.	Lestor.
Liverpool Street, Walworth, Camberwell Gate ...	11.30 a.m.	Godfrey. Banks.	Barnewell. Goldstein.	Grainger.	Grainger.
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# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

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[Monthly, Twopence

*Socialism is .  
impossible . .  
without . . .  
democracy. . .  
The Socialist  
Party is . . .  
democratic in  
structure, . . .  
method and  
aim.*

## Changing Russia

The report that Russia is about to apply for admission to the League of Nations and to be given a place on the Council of the League brings to the mind the change that has come over Russian policy in the years since the Bolshevik uprising of 1917.

When the Bolsheviks came to power they and their admirers trumpeted forth the information that the first Socialist State had been established, but that it could not hold its place without the inevitable and imminent revolutionary flood that was about to sweep over the world. Russia was claimed as the vanguard of the Socialist revolution and in numerous writings it was pointed out that its policy would be to foment and assist the

development of the social revolution in other countries.

For the first few years this was in fact the policy of the Bolsheviks who greeted the short-lived Soviets of Hungary and Bavaria with delight and extravagant phrases. It was also under the shadow of Russia that the now almost forgotten Third International was

formed. It was also Russia that, in spite of the poverty of its workers, provided funds to enable glib-tongued Labour leaders to enjoy undreamed-of trips across the world and return home to make triumphal tours relating the most minute details of what was being accomplished in a vast country of whose language they were entirely ignorant.

In the last few years a complete change has gradually come over the foreign policy of Soviet Russia. An indication of how complete the change is can be gathered from the following quotation from the pledge given by Litvinoff to President Roosevelt on November 16th, 1933, that it will be the fixed policy of the Soviet Government

not to permit the formation of any organisation or group—and to prevent the activity on its territory of any organisation or group—which has as an aim the overthrow or the preparation for the overthrow of, or bringing about by force of a change in, the political or social order of the whole or any part of the United States, its territories or possessions. ("International Conciliation," June, 1934, No. 301, page 232.)

Compare the above with the statement from the "Communist Manifesto" quoted by Emile Burns in "What is the Communist Party?" which runs as follows:—

The Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things.

Russia has evidently travelled far from this policy, although its Communist allies here are either too blind to see it or too servile to say so. Its continued economic relations with such countries as Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy put the matter beyond dispute.

As Russia has not established Socialism and is not doing so in spite of the repeated statement

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of Communists, it has to carry on its work and build up its industries on lines similar to normal capitalist countries; it must therefore enter into normal trade relations with the rest of the world, and it does so. As Harry Pollitt put it, "Soviet Union, in her own interests, must buy where she can sell." ("Communist International," July 15th, 1933, page 478.) Which is sound capitalist economics!

When, in 1924, the Bolsheviks decided to throw overboard the "world revolution" (except as a mere phrase to give lip-service to) and concentrate on building up the internal resources of the country on the plea that they were building up Socialism in a single country (a complete reversal of their former views), the Communists of the world, who take their policy from Moscow, have simply been used to help on this object.

The foreign policy of Russia is aimed at living more or less amicably with the rest of the capitalist world, and they can only do this because they are building as the capitalists do.

Socialism is a system diametrically opposed to capitalism and impossible in a predominantly capitalist world. It is impossible in one country alone, owing to international economic interdependence. It is international and not national.

The extravagant claims held out of the success of Socialism in Russia have one by one been proved by time to be groundless and Russia is rapidly approaching the stage of taking its place as a first-class capitalist power.

It may not be out of place to remind the more recent recruits to the Communist view that, among the many false forecasts made by the Bolsheviks, the most prominent was their utterly groundless view that the world would be a Communist one within a few years of the ending of the War. All the Bolshevik leaders of the time, including Lenin, Trotsky and Zinoviev, were swept off their feet by this view. How strongly they held it may be gathered from the following quotation from a statement by Zinoviev, the first president of the Communist International. On May 1st, 1919, he wrote:—

Old Europe is dashing at mad speed towards the proletarian revolution. . . . Separate defeats will still occur in the near future. Black will perhaps win a victory here and there over red. But the final victory will, nevertheless, go to the red; and this in the course of the next month, perhaps even weeks. The movement is proceeding at such terrific speed that we may say with full confidence, within a year we shall already begin to forget that there was a struggle for communism in Europe, because in a year the whole of Europe will be communist. And the struggle for communism will be transferred to America, perhaps to Asia, and to other parts of the world. . . . Perhaps—for a few years, and side by side with Communist Europe—we shall see American capitalism continue to exist. Perhaps even in England capitalism will continue to exist for a year or two, side by side with communism victorious in the whole of continental Europe. But such a co-existence cannot last long. Page 217. (Quoted by "International Conciliation," June, 1934, No. 301.)

The first conference of the Third International also looked forward to the establishment of the world Soviet the following year.

Many years have passed away since the above expectations were expressed and nowadays the friends of Soviet Russia are busy trying to organise a united front against Fascism and Nazism when they are not busy explaining away the Bolshevik agreements with Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany.

GILMAC.

## The Collapse of Capitalism

### Attitude of the S.P.G.B.

A correspondent (C. L., Victoria, Canada) states that a speaker of the Canadian Co-operative Commonwealth Federation asserts that the attitude now adopted by the S.P.G.B. on the question of the so-called collapse of capitalism is not the attitude adopted before the War. The speaker asks when we changed our view.

First, we ought to explain that the term "collapse of capitalism" is itself used with widely different meanings. Some people have used it as a colourful way of describing the periodical crises into which capitalism falls. So long as it is made clear that nothing more is meant, this use of the phrase is not open to any serious objection. It happened, however, during and after the Great War that the phrase was popularised with a very different meaning. The American writer, Herman Cahn, in his "The Collapse of Capitalism" and "Capital To-day," revived and elaborated the theory that capitalism, through the development of its own contradictions, would reach a stage of final, devastating physical collapse. The particular feature Cahn seized upon was the growth of the cheque system, and the war-time currency inflation which he saw going on in various countries. He not only forecast the collapse of capitalism but was rash enough to give it a date.

Writing apparently in or about the year 1917, he said:—

Its (i.e., capitalism's) downfall, root and branch, will be positively assured by a continuation of the war for, say, another year. That downfall will then be like an act of nature, and not dependent on the mental and moral preparation of the peoples of the world for a new form of society which must, perforce, be completely social. (Page 38, "Collapse of Capitalism.")

He did not, however, tie himself down to the continuance of the War, but added (page 118) that, war or peace, the "days of the rule of gold are numbered," and with it the days of capitalism also. If war went on, capitalism's downfall would be early and sudden. If war ended, there would be a "lingering death struggle."

The broad idea that capitalism in one of its

periodical crises might come to a point of collapse in the sense of chaos or a complete stoppage of production, is a very old one. Its principal danger (apart from its misreading of crises and the ability of the capitalists to muddle through) is brought out strikingly in the point which Cahn strongly emphasised. Throughout his writings, and in the writings of leading Communists in the early post-war years, the point is constantly made that the early and inevitable collapse had made Socialist propaganda and the conversion of the majority to Socialism unnecessary and useless. The catastrophe, they said, was already about to break over us. There was no time for educating the workers. All that we could do was to seize the "psychological moment" when it came, and lead the blind masses to Socialism with or without their knowledge and consent. In the cant phrase of the time the revolution was (and still is) just round the corner.

With that preliminary explanation we can now answer the questions about the S.P.G.B.'s attitude. On the major question, the impossibility of achieving Socialism without first convincing a majority of the population, the S.P.G.B. has never at any time held any view but the one it holds now. Right from the first issue of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD, that, more than almost any other point, divided the S.P.G.B. from the other parties calling themselves Socialist. Never at any time did the S.P.G.B. accept the notion that Socialism could be forced on a non-Socialist population by leaders taking advantage of discontent during a crisis. See, for example, the answer given in THE SOCIALIST STANDARD in August, 1905, to a correspondent who had said that the S.P.G.B.'s attitude could be summed up as, "Preach economic considerations as the sole factor in social development, and wait until the crash comes." The reply given to him was that this was "decidedly not the policy of the S.P.G.B. . . . It is inevitable that economic development will bring things to a crisis, but whether from out of this crisis will arise the Socialist Commonwealth depends upon whether sufficient of the working class have been made Socialists, and have been class-consciously organised."

Whether or not the phrase "collapse of capitalism" was used by writers in THE SOCIALIST STANDARD in the pre-war years, we are unable to say. If it was used it would always be against the background of the above contention that there could be no Socialism without an organised Socialist working-class; for that point was always being made and it is certain that no writer could have held any other view. What is possible is that some members of the S.P.G.B. in the early years had never had occasion to consider closely the question whether or not a crisis of capitalism could properly be called a "collapse," in the sense used

by Cahn and the Communists later on. That being so, there may be expressions used in early articles, which reflect the writer's lack of definiteness on the point. We have, however, not been able, so far, to find any. It must be remembered in this connection that the S.P.G.B. does not claim that, with the formulation of its Declaration of Principles in 1904, it had reached definite and final conclusions on all the aspects of capitalism and Socialism. All that was aimed at was the indispensable minimum which would constitute a sufficient basis for a Socialist Party. Nothing has occurred to warrant departing from the Declaration of Principles, but the members of the Party, in the course of years, have been able to clarify and extend their knowledge over a much wider range of subjects, for they have had the advantage of the knowledge of the men who formed the Party, and have been able to study many phases of capitalism (e.g., a world war) which had not occurred within the lifetime of the founders.

It was not until the end of the War that the idea of a catastrophic collapse had its rebirth and popularity, and it is therefore only natural that the present member of the S.P.G.B. knows more of these theories and is better informed and more definite as to their fallacies than was the average member before the War. If, however, the question had been raised before the War in its post-war form, there is no doubt whatever what the answer would have been.

ED. COMM.

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## Some Observations on Production and Productivity

In the August issue reference was made to the comparative slowness with which industrial productivity increases. (See "This Age of Plenty.") As that statement runs counter to a widespread belief, it will be worth while setting out some of the relevant factors in order to justify the conclusion arrived at.

First of all, let us look at the claims made by those who believe that we have entered into an age of astounding productivity, an "age of plenty."

The American group who call themselves "Technocrats" claim that the output per head of the workers in industry has increased thousands of times within a comparatively short period. Then Mr. J. L. Hodgson, author of "The Great God Waste" (see review in July SOCIALIST STANDARD), claimed in a broadcast talk delivered on April 17th, 1934 (obtainable from Mr. Hodgson at Eggington, Beds., at 2d. a copy), that "we have devised machines which speed up output per man of such things and processes as shoes, flour, pig-iron, bricks, ploughing and reaping, from fifty to three thousand times."

In "The Great God Waste," Mr. Hodgson tells us that the tractor and combined harvester and thresher "have during the last fifteen years increased the daily output of the wheatfield worker by some seventyfold" (page 10); and that his experience has revealed to him "a vast and continuous increase in both industrial efficiency and in actual productive capacity" (page 9). These two statements appear in a section headed "Our Immense Potential Productivity."

Mr. H. Norman Smith, prospective Labour Candidate for Faversham, writing in *Forward* (August 11th), claims, in complete seriousness, that mechanical progress has gone so far in the direction of increasing output per head that we are within measurable distance of "one immense robot factory, employing no workmen at all," which "can deliver an unending stream of all the goods mankind needs."

Black-shirted Sir Oswald Mosley, ever greedy to appropriate the more spectacular theories of his former Labour Party associates, now shares this "age of plenty" notion with his green-shirted Douglasite opponents. In his "Greater Britain" (1934 edition, page 61) he says that "Science, Invention, Technique, have recently increased the power to produce out of the range of all previous experience."

There is no need to multiply instances, they abound in the journals published by the Technocrats, the Douglasites, the Mosleyites, the I.L.P. and the Labour Party. (The Communists, at least in Great Britain, have taken a sounder line on this

question, due perhaps to Russian industrial experience.)

Now let us indicate what would be some of the results if these astounding increases of productivity had occurred.

First, it is obvious that if the output of each worker increased enormously, then a given number of workers would produce an enormously greater total output. On the other hand, if the total output were not increased, then the number of workers needed to produce the former total output would be enormously decreased.

By applying that test to industry we can at once dispose of one group of believers in an "age of plenty," viz., the group that believes this enormous increase of productivity has actually been utilised in industry, in the direction, not of decreasing the number of workers, but of enormously increasing the total product. They can be shown to be wrong, because no such enormous increase has taken place. In Great Britain several reliable inquiries agree that only a very moderate increase in total output occurs year by year.

For example, in 1928 *The Economist* published "A British Index of National Prosperity," by Mr. G. D. Rokeling, with a commendatory preface by Sir Josiah Stamp. Mr. Rokeling estimated the annual changes in the amount of "real national income" per head of the population. It is a little difficult to explain briefly what "real national income" meant in this connection, but roughly it represented the amount (not the value) of production of all kinds during each year. Although the final index included also income from abroad, and income from abroad had increased very rapidly, Mr Rokeling showed that the "real national income" per head of the population in 1927 was only four per cent. greater than it was in 1920, while in the intervening "crisis" years, 1921 to 1923, it was actually very much less than in 1920. Mr. Rokeling later extended the index to the year 1929, by which year there had been an increase to eight per cent. above the level of 1920, giving a total increase of only eight per cent. in nine years.

A second set of figures to support the view here put forward, is provided by the London and Cambridge Economic Service, which compiles an index of the "physical volume of production," covering all the chief groups of manufacture, mining, food production, etc. This index at its peak (end of 1929) reached to only fifteen per cent. above the level of 1924. It then declined in 1932 to a point nearly twenty-five per cent. below the level of 1924, and did not reach the 1924 level again until 1934. (See Royal Economic Society

Reports on Economic Conditions. Memorandum No. 46, April, 1934.)

Estimates compiled by the Board of Trade, and others, give a similar picture. Our first conclusion is, therefore, that even during a period of more or less continuous expansion of production and sales, such as that from 1924 to 1929, the total output of industry increased by only a small percentage; in the above instance an average of two per cent. or three per cent. a year. (At certain periods, and in other countries, a somewhat larger increase has been estimated, but still of a quite moderate size. Some American figures suggest an increase of factory productivity of about five per cent. a year.)

### Is Labour Still Needed in Production?

We now come to the second line of defence of the believers in an "Age of Plenty." The Technocrats, and others, say that productivity per head increases, but not the total volume of production, because fewer and fewer workers are being employed in production. Thus one of the Technocrats, Mr. W. W. Parrish (*New Outlook*, New York, November and December, 1932), claimed that "man-hours per unit of product and the labour cost per unit have dropped in recent years to levels approaching zero."

Mr. Norman Smith says (*Forward*, August 4th, 1934) that "mechanical invention steadily reduces the number of man-hours in production," so much so in fact that, as we have already seen, Mr. Smith is contemplating the idea of wealth production by machines without workers. He wants the Labour Party to consider dropping its name because there isn't any "labour" any more, while the Douglasites try to make our flesh creep with threats that "soon"—how soon, nobody knows; Major Douglas has been playing fat-boy for at least twenty years and his "theories" are a century or more old—all the workers, except a mere handful, will be unemployed.

The Census of Production figures (*Board of Trade Journal*, February 16th, 1933) are a complete answer to this superficial view of industry. Those figures show that between 1924 and 1930 the total number of persons employed in factory trades, building and contracting, and mines and quarries, *did decline*, but not by the vast numbers assumed by the Technocrats and others. The decline was from 6,411,000 to 6,013,600, a total decline of only 397,400, or six per cent.—an average of less than one per cent. a year.

The same Board of Trade inquiry shows that in the six years the total volume of manufactured goods decreased by two per cent., while the number of workers in manufacturing industries alone declined by about five-and-a-half per cent.

Again, the *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, in December, 1933, published figures showing the

number of insured workers actually in employment, divided into separate groups according to industry. For the whole group of manufacturing industries the number employed in June, 1933 (in spite of the depression and consequent low output), was within one per cent. of the number at June, 1923. (The number of workers in transport, distribution, building, etc., and also the number of workers in all insured trades *increased* between 1923 and 1933.)

Perhaps the most convincing disproof of the theory of rapid displacement of workers can be gained by examining an industry—the boot industry—in which, according to these theorists, some of the most striking mechanical developments have occurred. *Attack*, organ of the green-shirt Douglasites (June, 1934), for example, gave figures purporting to show a vast increase in productivity in the manufacture of boots and shoes. Yet when we look at the number of workers employed in this industry we find that between 1923 and 1933 the decline was actually less than two per cent. (*Ministry of Labour Gazette*, December, 1933.)

It will take more than two per cent. in ten years to set the Douglasite Thames on fire.

Or take agriculture, the industry in which, so Mr. Hodgson believes, the productivity of wheat-field workers has increased seventy-fold. Between 1923 and 1933 the number of persons employed in agriculture decreased from 772,387 to 715,100—a decrease of seven-and-a-half per cent. in ten years, less than one per cent. a year. (*Statistical Abstract*, 1934, page 259.)

Before leaving this question of the development of labour, it is interesting to notice how easily the careless use of figures can mislead. At the Conference of the Boot and Shoe Operatives' Union, on May 21st, 1934, the census of production figures were given quite accurately and legitimate conclusions drawn from them. Several newspapers and propaganda journals, however, seized upon the figures and presented them as proof of the great increase in productivity. Actually the figures pointed to an increase of productivity per worker of less than three per cent. a year, from twenty-two pairs a week in 1924 to twenty-six pairs in 1930.

Incidentally, as the Technocrats have been responsible for much of the nonsense written about productivity, it is as well to remember that their figures have been discredited. When *The Economist* (London, March 18th, 1933) reviewed Raymond's "What is Technocracy?" they agreed with his conclusion that the Technocrats' figures were "wildly inaccurate," and their researches "worthless."

### Does Waste Increase?

Some of the "Age of Plenty" warriors have still a third line of defence. Productivity



does increase very rapidly, they say, but this is offset by a colossal wastage. Mr. J. L. Hodgson claims that "wealth and amenities do not increase one-tenth as fast as they would do if the hidden leaks could be discovered and stopped." ("Great God Waste," page 14.)

He went on to say that the effect of these "leaks" more than doubled during a period of a few months last year.

Now before looking for the fallacy in this argument, let us be clear about two distinct ways in which it could operate: (a) in industry itself, and (b) outside industry.

The first assumption (increased waste in industry itself) would work out as follows: Great increases in output per head assumed in each industry, but instead of sacking the redundant workers, or increasing the total output of industry, the employer allows (or is deceived into allowing) the redundant workers to be carried as "passengers." Thus the increased output per head of some of the workers would be offset by the fact that the rest of the workers idled away their time doing nothing. Now that *would* be one way of explaining how an increase in productivity per head could be offset by a growing "wastage" inside industry, and to some slight and temporary extent it may actually happen. In general, however, nothing of the kind is permitted to occur. Employers do not allow their workers to spend the day amusing themselves.

To be quite fair to Mr. Hodgson, he at least does not offer this as an explanation of the way in which the total output of industry fails to reflect a supposed increase in output per head. He would no doubt agree with us that if a boot manufacturer found that he could turn out as many boots with only one-tenth of the men (and assuming that he could not multiply his sales by ten) he would promptly sack the other nine-tenths.

We all know that the employers and their managers and foremen, and the scientific "sweaters" who form so-called industrial-psychology organisations, never cease to seek out ways of economising and increasing efficiency, and reducing staff.

Mr. Hodgson says that he has had much first-hand experience of one aspect of this economising process, and he readily admits that, so far from there being an increase in *waste inside industry* there is a constant decrease.

In order then to support the theory that an enormous increase in output per head is offset by an enormous increase of wastage, we must seek this wastage outside industry, not inside.

Mr. Hodgson tries to do this. He mentions many obvious instances of "wastage" (known to Socialists for generations), such as unemployment, destruction of goods, war, advertising, etc., and out of this he constructs his theory of "leaks"

which result in wealth increasing only one-tenth as fast as it otherwise would do.

Unfortunately, Mr. Hodgson does not show in full how he arrives at his estimate of the total amount of "wastage," and when he does give details he exhibits a carelessness which does not encourage us to accept the rest of his estimate with any confidence.

On page 20, for example, he says that unemployment is three millions, plus another million temporarily stopped; being unaware apparently that the first figure already includes those temporarily stopped.

However, that is by the way. The main point is that even if Mr. Hodgson's estimates of the volume of wastage were accurate they are not what is required to prove his case. His theory of a constant nullification of *rapidly increasing* productivity in industry, demands not merely evidence of large waste outside industry, but of *rapidly increasing* waste. He does not supply this and does not even attempt to do so in spite of being challenged several times on the point.

He has not done so for the very good reason that he cannot. No such enormous increase in wastage occurs. Both that and the alleged enormous increase in industrial productivity are myths.

It is probable that during a period of capitalist expansion following a crisis, "wastage" both inside and outside industry decreases as a whole, owing to the decrease of unemployment which is one of the largest components of the latter kind of "waste."

We may sum up our analysis by saying that productivity per head of the workers in any established industry, and the total output of industry as a whole, are increased by inventions, machinery and new processes, but only at a comparatively slow rate.

In conclusion, it may be noticed that these "high-productivity," "age of plenty," "production without labour" theories, are typical by-products of each capitalist depression, born of crisis out of ignorance; just as the contrary nonsense of the Malthusians has its heyday during each period of capitalist expansion, when we are asked to gaze on the horrid prospect of famine through population increasing faster than our means of subsistence.

H.

#### WALTHAMSTOW.

LECTURES will be given at Workmen's Hall (Room 2), 82, High Street, Walthamstow on Wednesdays, September 5th and September 19th.

Sept. 5th "Aspects of Socialism" Russell  
Sept. 19th. "Lessons of the French Revolution" Reginald

Admission Free. Commence at 8 p.m. Questions and discussion  
Non-members invited

## Answers to Correspondents

Mr. J. L. HODGSON (Eggington, Beds.).  
—(See also article in this issue, "Some Observations on Production and Productivity.")

You are evidently unaware that the alleged scientific researches of the Technocrats were discredited as soon as they were subjected to responsible examination. The illustration given by you on page 54 of your book (footnote) leaves out of account the power station, workshop, etc. Were these produced without human labour? Regarding your attitude to Capitalism and Socialism, nowhere in your book can we find any statement that you are aware of the necessity of dispossessing the capitalist class of their property in the means of production and distribution and making these the common property of society as a whole. That you are not in favour of this is shown by your proposals for the continuance of the banking system, a price system, and purchasing power (pages 48 and 49). A society in which goods are produced for use will obviously have no use for any of these. You yourself (page 48) describe the distribution of purchasing power and the pegging of prices as "two main things" which "seem to be necessary." Whether as an immediate or as a distant objective they are both worthless and have nothing to do with the abolition of Capitalism and its replacement by Socialism. You entirely miss the point of the remark that the question of what is wasteful is inseparable from the system of society. The production of gold by capitalist countries like South Africa and Russia is not waste, for Capitalism requires gold or some other basis for its monetary system. Under Socialism, on the other hand, when there will be no monetary system, the production of gold for this purpose will be unnecessary. You similarly misunderstand the reference to reparations. We do not accept the narrow nationalistic view that the only question to be considered is the welfare of all or some of the people living in England only. It is therefore true that "the world is not made poorer or richer by the ability of the capitalists in one country to get goods for nothing from the capitalists in another." It is also very much to the point that the goods belong to private individuals. We dispute the validity of your use of the word "community" to describe a social group in which one class owns and another class is dispossessed. You still do not explain how you are going to distribute purchasing power as a gift without taking it away from those who have it.

The reference to the period before 1844 has nothing whatever to do with whether or not you want to re-create the private banks. We simply

asked what you meant by the statement that, prior to 1844, there existed a condition—"credit power . . . widely diffused throughout the community"—which you want to re-create now. If you mean that poverty did not exist before 1844 we deny it.

You ask if we want "detailed proof that bricks can be made with a less total expenditure of man-hours when the brickmaker is aided by power-driven machinery." As you are very well aware, this has never been denied. What we do want (and this you persistently decline to give) is proof of your fantastic statement that "We have devised machines which speed up the output per man of such things and processes as shoes, flour, pig-iron, bricks, ploughing and reaping, from 50 to 3,000 times." If you can produce evidence, why not do so?

The Socialist view concerning "specialists" and "experts" is that they will play their part like other individuals. Russia's difficulties connected with her development as an industrial capitalist power have little or no bearing on the problem of development from Capitalism to Socialism.

The cause of poverty is at base, the private ownership of the means of life, land, factories, railways, etc. We cannot find any indication in your book that you have grasped this. Since prices and banks (whether planned or otherwise, controlled or uncontrolled, pegged or loose) are of use only to Capitalism, they are rightly described as useless measures for the abolition of poverty.

ED. COMM.

\* \* \* \* \*

"COMMUNIST."—We have your letter in which you argue that the Communists "are going the right way, but cannot explain themselves very well." If you give your name and address (not necessarily for publication) we will reply to your letter. We do not answer anonymous letters.

ED. COMM.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Answers held over.

Several Answers to Correspondents are held over owing to lack of space. ED. COMM.

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## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

SEPTEMBER,



1934

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

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The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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## No More War?

Twenty years ago a war commenced of a nature more devastating than any that had occurred before. So great was the feeling of horror aroused by the carnage and the barbarities committed at the time that there was general assurance that "never again" would such a thing happen—and ever since the governments have been preparing for even worse wars. At present, in Europe and the East, nations are watching each other on the verge of flying at each other's throats, moved by economic motives similar to those which set guns belching death and destruction in those old unhappy years.

Already nations are preparing the ground of justification by measures to stir up feelings of patriotism and the rankling spirit of wrongs that require righting. Armies, navies and air fleets are being overhauled and increased, and scientists are hard at work devising means of defence and means of destruction.

The hollow farce of the League of Nations still plays its expensive and idle part in the game. One of its principal supporters, Viscount Cecil, speaking at Windermere on August 11th, said that "No one could feel security for peace at present. Every day new disturbances arose, rumours of war got about, and countries were preparing for the worst." (*The Observer*, August 12th, 1934.)

A week or two ago a huge Italian army was on the borders of Austria fully equipped to launch into war should affairs in Austria take a turn that militated against the economic interests of Italian capitalists. At the moment of writing, Russia and Japan are on the brink of conflict over the Chinese

Eastern Railway. Incidentally, the diplomats of the different countries are hard at work arranging pacts for mutual aid in the event of a war breaking out.

One fact appears fairly clear, and that is that the art of the chemist will play a considerable part in another big war. According to Lord Hailsham, it would be impossible to provide adequate defence against gas attacks. The horrors of the last war may therefore appear as pleasant memories compared with the horrors of the next. The very fact that in face of this there are large groups quite ready to engage in war is a fearful illustration of the urge of profit-seeking in modern civilisation. The underlying causes of war are the efforts to further business, buying and selling, with the object of making profit and thereby enriching those who have invested capital in various enterprises, including the making of engines of war.

The way to prevent war is not by engaging in anti-war campaigns. These are quite useless, because they leave the causes of war untouched. The only preventative is to take away the urge to war; take away the profit motive. While private ownership of the means of existence remains, the making of profit is the object of the private owners. Abolish private ownership and substitute for it common ownership in the means of production and the profit motive disappears, taking with it the seeds of war, both internal and external.

Socialism is the only means to defeat the war-mongers.

## Human Nature

The critics of the Socialist case are legion, but the diversity of their arguments is very limited. At street corner or in public hall, from Land's End to John o' Groats, in Great Britain and abroad, one hears the same arguments, couched in similar words, from those who would refute the case for Socialism. It would almost appear as if they vied with one another in their efforts to be unoriginal.

One of these stock arguments is the one which the Socialist designates as "The Human Nature argument." It is frequently the first question which rises to the lips of the but recently interested worker, and it is often the last line of defence of the opponent who has been driven from every other point of vantage by the logic of the Socialist case.

It is usually worded thus: "Ah! But you cannot change human nature"; or "Socialism is desirable, but human nature would not allow it." However the query is worded, the answer is the same—the Socialist calls upon the members of the working class to organise consciously and politically for the capture of the machinery of government in order that this machinery may be used to establish

a Socialist system of society. A revolutionary proposition this, which human nature and the laws which govern social development demand. Let us explain.

First of all, what is this human nature? What is there in the nature of human beings which can prevent the establishment of Socialism? It is the nature of the human being to be social. Man is essentially a social being, not merely because he enjoys the companionship of his fellows, but out of sheer necessity. It has been a part of the process by which man has evolved from a lowly primitive state to his present "exalted" civilised condition. Had he not developed a social sentiment early in this process of evolution, even before he assumed the form of man, the species would have become extinct. And to-day no one ever dreams of man living the life of a Robinson Crusoe, with, of course, the possible exception of some imaginary beings who people the textbooks of the orthodox economists and capitalist apologists. So let us repeat, it is the nature of humans to be social.

"Ah!" we can hear the critics saying, "that's agreed, but man, having become a social being, then proceeds to behave towards his fellow men in a most unsocial manner." Therein our critics reveal their error, for in using the word "behave" they expose their illogical argument. Human nature and human behaviour are not quite identical, although one is the product of the other. We have said that man has become a social being out of sheer necessity, likewise his behaviour is determined by necessity,

the necessity to live. Man needs to live and in order to live he must have food, and some shelter from the elements. It is in order that he may procure these that he enters into relations with his fellows, or, in other words, forms society, and it is the manner by which he procures his subsistence that determines the relations entered into, or, the form which society takes. When, as was once the case, the method of obtaining the necessities of life was by the use of such primitive tools as the bow and arrow, then men's relationships were framed accordingly, and most certainly did not include such relations as those of employer and employee, nor did this early society include such institutions as trade unions. The means of production being primitive, and, in consequence, each member of society being able to produce only just sufficient for his own maintenance, it was not possible for one man to enslave another. A man who needs to devote all his time to obtaining the things necessary for his own existence is useless as a slave and so, in primitive society, the institution of slavery did not arise. Men lived in tribes, and within the tribe the things necessary to the tribe's existence were communally owned. This determined the behaviour of tribesmen to one another. Many explorers and travellers have testified to the behaviour of men living under such conditions, as, for example, the following.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

Lewis Morgan, who lived for a considerable period among North American Indians, in his book, "Ancient Society," wrote: "If a man entered an Iroquois house, whether a villager,



a tribesman or a stranger, and at whatever hour of the day, it was the duty of the woman of the house to set food before him. If hungry, he eats, if not hungry, courtesy required that he should taste the food and thank the giver."

Likewise, Paul Lafargue, in his "Evolution of Property," quotes from James Adair's "History of the American Indians": "To be narrow-hearted, especially to those in want, or to any of their own family, is accounted a great crime, and to reflect scandal on the rest of the tribe."

The same author quotes Catlin, who also lived among the wildest of Indian tribes in North America, as saying: "Morality and virtue, I venture to say, the civilised world need not undertake to teach them." And men behaved like this when, and because, the means of life were commonly owned; and the means of life were commonly owned because it was the necessary form of ownership at that stage of social development.

Just one other of Lafargue's references from the book already mentioned, a quotation from the Jesuit Charlevoix: "The brotherly sentiments of the Redskins are doubtless in part ascribable to the fact that the words MINE and THINE, . . . are all unknown as yet to the savages. The protection they extend to the orphans, the widows and the infirm, the hospitality which they exercise in so admirable a manner, are, in their eyes, but a consequence of the conviction which they hold that all things should be common to all men."

Since those times, in Europe at least, the means of production have evolved from the bow-and-arrow stage to the present highly complicated machine stage. The spear has given place to the plough, the hand-operated machine to the modern mechanical wonder, the horse-drawn cart to the motor-car, or steam-driven or electrically-driven train or tramway system. Hand-in-hand with this development has gone on a change in the relationships between the individuals who make up society and a corresponding change in the social form, until to-day we live in capitalist society wherein the relationships are based on the private ownership of the means of living, with the consequent division into classes of those who own these means and those who own nothing but their ability to work, their labour-power.

Within capitalist society production is for sale, even the energy of the workers. Before the worker can draw his wage he must sell his energy, for which the wage is the price. Before the capitalist can draw his dividend the products of the workers' toil must be sold. Buying and selling—always buying and selling. It is the very essence of the system we live under. Worker must compete with worker in an effort to sell his labour-power; shopkeeper must compete with shopkeeper; combine with combine; nation with nation.

Competition implies struggle, struggle means strife. Woe to him who gives up the struggle, the penalties are heavy. Nations fight it out in wars, combines seek to establish and maintain monopolies, shopkeepers cut prices and the losers pass, by way of the bankruptcy court, into the ranks of the dispossessed, there to compete with millions of others for an opportunity to sell their labour-power to the highest bidder. Each must scramble with his fellows to get the necessities of life and can only rise by climbing on the backs of others.

It is this that determines human behaviour—the necessity to get a living. It is this that our critics call human nature. It is this that makes men Socialists. It is this that determines that Socialism must follow capitalism. Human nature has not changed since man first appeared, nor will it while he exists; but human behaviour—that undergoes a process of continuous change. The workers to-day, realising more and more that their cut-throat behaviour results in a weakening of their power to resist the encroachments made on their conditions by their masters, are changing that behaviour, as witness the manner in which some, who, although disagreeing with the actions of fellow workers in trade disputes, frequently "fall into line" in order to assist in an attempt to achieve some improvement of their lot. The development of society has produced a working class, and that class has evolved its own class conduct, its own behaviour of members towards one another. Class-solidarity it is usually termed, but no matter what it is called, it is part of human behaviour, and when the working class shall overthrow capitalism and establish a system of society in keeping with its own and society's interests, then that new form will, in its turn, determine human behaviour.

The Socialist does not propose a "change of heart," but a change in the basis of society, a change from private to common ownership of the means of living. No Utopian idea this, but a dire necessity determined by social development. Not the struggle of a sect, but an historical revolutionary movement, guided by principles based on a scientific investigation of society and the laws which govern its development.

When man has access to the wealth he produces, and has no further need to struggle and compete with his fellow men for a portion of that wealth, then, and not till then, will his behaviour correspond with his nature and become social. There can be no "peace on earth" while there remains a class society; there can be but little "brotherly love" whilst there is capitalism. The solution lies not in exhorting men to be charitable to their enemies, but in establishing a Socialist society wherein men will not be angels, but just

men; wherein competition will give place to co-operation, and all humans, without distinction of race or sex, will live secure, full, and pleasurable lives. W. WATERS.

## Educational Course for Party Members

This winter, instead of classes solely in Economics, we are organising a comprehensive course of study covering a wide field of Socialist knowledge. Our aims in presenting this series of classes on co-ordinated subjects are; (a) to offer a complete course of study to those wishing to take the Speakers' Test; (b) to provide a starting-point for those wishing to make a more detailed study of any branch of Socialist thought; (c) at the same time to supply ample material for future lectures in the various Branches.

It is to be hoped that students of the course—which is intended for Party members—will be able to repeat some at least of the Lectures to Branches, and that ultimately several Branches will offer complete courses simultaneously. The principal object of the classes will be to provide the Party with an adequate supply of well-equipped speakers.

The classes will be held at Head Office on Sundays, beginning on September 23rd, from 4.0 to 6.0 p.m. Tea will be obtainable from 6.0 p.m.

### TITLES OF LECTURES.

- Sept. 23—How to Study.  
30—Materialism.
- Oct. 7—Primitive Society.  
14—Slave Civilisations.  
21—Feudalism.  
28—Merchant Capitalism.
- Nov. 4—The Reformation and the Puritan Revolution.  
11—The Industrial Revolution.  
18—The French Revolution.  
25—The Paris Commune.
- Dec. 2—Causes and Consequences of the World War.  
9—The British Empire.  
16—American History.  
23—History of Parliament.  
30—History of Trade Unions.
- Jan. 6—General Strikes.  
13—The Internationals.  
20—Ancient Religion.  
27—Modern Religion.
- Feb. 3—Science.  
10—Art.  
17—Psychology.  
24—Theories of Value before Marx.

- Mar. 3—Marxian Theory of Value.  
10—Division of Surplus Value.  
17—Money.  
24—Banking.  
31—Crises.

- Apr. 7—Revision.  
14—Revision.

All members of each class will receive copies of the outline of the current lecture. Every endeavour will be made to encourage each member of the class to contribute to discussion at every lecture.

The active and enthusiastic co-operation of all Party speakers and Branches in London is, of course, vitally necessary to the success of this scheme, both in encouraging regular attendance and in helping to provide fruitful discussion on all subjects.

M. CAMERON,

Organiser of Classes.

### Bloomsbury

Lectures will be held at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C.1 (near Gray's Inn Road), every Monday evening at 8.30 p.m., commencing on September 3rd.

Admission free—Questions and Discussion. All invited.

### Index to "Socialist Standard"

The Index for the year ended August, 1934, is now on sale. In order to decrease the loss on the sale of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD Index, the price has been raised to 2d. per copy (2½d. post free).

Order from Literature Secretary, 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1, or nearest branch.

Copies of the Index for the previous year are also available.

### Pessimists Note

It is sometimes urged against the Socialist movement that the majority of people are so apathetic that the possibility of accomplishing the end is well-nigh hopeless. Those who take this pessimistic view forget that a very good reason for the existence of this apathy is the lack of effort on the part of the pessimists. If all those who claim to accept the Socialist point of view pressed this view forward with vigour, the apathetic attitude of the majority would rapidly diminish.

### The Conduct of Public Meetings

With reference to the editorial "Reason or Violence?" in the July SOCIALIST STANDARD, the Secretary of the British Section, International Socialist Labour Party, writes to say that that organisation, like the S.P.G.B., allows questions and open discussion at all propaganda meetings.



## NOTES BY THE WAY

### Parliament as a Working Machine

Much ink and lung power is being wasted at the moment by half-baked critics of things as they are, who attribute our ills to the defects of the Parliamentary machine. Parliament, they say, is too slow, it creaks and obstructs, scrap it for a really fast-moving dictatorship or sub-committee of the Socialist League.

All this criticism misses the point. Parliament moves as fast or as slow as those who control it want it to move. If the present Conservative majority does not introduce social reforms desired by the opposition, that is not because Parliament won't let them, but because they do not want to introduce these particular reforms. But let capitalist interests require some fast work and then see what happens.

On June 14th, 1934, Germany announced its intention of defaulting on some bonds held by English investors. Six days later (June 20th) Parliament took the first, or purely formal reading, of the Debts Clearing Offices and Import Restrictions Bill, enabling the Government to seize monies due to Germans for goods sold in England.

The second reading was on June 25th; the Committee hearing and third reading on June 26th; the acceptance of a House of Lords' amendment on June 28th; and the Royal assent on the same day.

The Lords had dealt with the Bill in one day, June 27th.

Here we see a piece of legislation vitally affecting widespread interests of capitalist traders and investors, dealt with in three or four days of Parliamentary time. From Germany's announcement to the Royal assent took only fourteen days! Holland and Switzerland, with Parliamentary government, were equally prompt.

While we are on this subject, let us look at a piece of information published in *The Times* on July 21st. Fascist speakers have been heard to ask whether such an incident as the year-long hold-up of Waterloo Bridge could happen in Fascist Italy, where "talking-shops" (i.e., democratically elected councils) are supposed to have been replaced by smart, one-man, dictatorial direction from above.

Milan, according to *The Times* correspondent, also has its traffic problems, and tube railways have been agreed as the solution. That scheme "has been under consideration for many years," but, says the local dictator, "it is not likely for many reasons to take practical shape for a long time yet." So they have decided, "for a long time yet," to do without the tube railways, which they are agreed is the solution, and in their place to build the tunnels and run tramcars through

them. Even so, the work on this temporary and partial solution will not begin until next year, and will take up to three years. What price dictatorship?

### A Question to Mr. Attlee

Mr. Attlee, M.P., wrote an article in the *Daily Herald* (August 14th) in which he tried to discuss what another Labour Government would do regarding wages, and in particular the wages of Post Office workers and other Government employees. His views are of some importance in the Labour Party, because he was P.M.G. under the last Labour Government, and is now Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party. These qualifications help him to speak with authority, but they also no doubt account for his very guarded utterances.

First, he candidly admits that the "Post Office is not an example of Socialism but of State capitalism"—something the S.P.G.B. has been trying to ram into the thick heads of the "Mr. Attlees" for thirty years. Perhaps, too, it was not so candid as it appears to be. It may very well have been introduced here just to serve as a convenient excuse for the failure of Mr. Attlee and the Labour Government to do anything material for Post Office workers when in office. It is not a case of Mr. Attlee having dropped "Post Office-ism" in order to take up Socialism. What he did was to back up Mr. Morrison's "Public Utilityism," and the one has as little to do with Socialism as the other.

Mr. Attlee observes that Post Office employees complain of "scandalously low rates of pay and other evils." He does not say that the complaints are justified—that would provoke questions as to why the Labour Government did not do something about it—nor does he say that the complaints are not justified—that would annoy some of his readers—who happen to know the facts. Then he goes on to lay the blame on the hard-hearted Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose department, or so says Mr. Attlee, "is to the Post Office just what the shareholders are to a private company."

That is as good a defence as Mr. Attlee is likely to find; that is, it is no good at all. It breaks down because the Labour Government (or any Government) is just as much responsible for the policy of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as for any other Department under its control. The fact is that many thousands of Post Office workers were and are paid at rates on which it is impossible to live in anything like decency and comfort. Mr. Attlee and his Labour predecessor at the Post Office, Mr. Lees-Smith, knew all about this but did nothing.

In spite of repeated protests they allowed Post Office and civil service pay to be reduced to the lowest level it has reached since the War. Now—in spite of a further fall in the cost of living since the Labour Government went out of office—the present Government has agreed to raise the level of pay slightly.

Will Mr. Attlee tell us why he consented to Post Office pay being reduced to this low level, seeing that the present P.M.G., Sir Kingsley Wood, has been able to get the Treasury dragons to allow some small improvement, and has, moreover, admitted publicly that hardship exists?

### When They are In Office, and when They are Out

Mr. Attlee had a few words to say on the "national minimum wage" as a method a Labour Government would adopt to raise wages. The proposal (although, of course, useless as a remedy) looks so beautiful in its simplicity, can it be that nobody has thought of it before? And can there be people who, having accepted it, subsequently find reasons for not applying it? Mr. Attlee has to admit that there are these villainous people, but their "arguments against a national minimum wage must now be abandoned."

Who were they? Why, none other than Mr. Attlee's party, when they were last in office. For years they had preached the need for a national minimum wage. Then, in November, 1930, when in office, they were asked by Mr. Kirkwood if they would introduce a bill to make wage reductions illegal. The Labour Prime Minister replied as follows (*Hansard*, November 26th, 1930; col. 1338):—

Wages, either real or nominal, cannot be fixed by legislation for the wage-earners generally. The Government's policy is to maintain standards of living and secure as equitable a distribution of wealth as is possible.

This will not prevent Mr. Attlee's party from playing the same trick once more if they ever get into office again.

### Not Interested in the Last War

On August 16th one of these lucky employees of the Post Office, a temporary postman, aged 47, was imprisoned for stealing postal orders. His wage was 34s. a week. The Chairman of the Bench, a Capt. A. Eve, when told that the prisoner had a good character, "served in the War and was discharged after being wounded and gassed," said: "We don't want to hear that. It is ancient history." (*Daily Herald*, August 17th.)

Of course, it is ancient history to talk about the victims of the last war at a time when our

rulers' attention is fully occupied with the possibility of another.

### Labour "Socialism"

Before leaving Mr. Attlee, it is worth while placing on record his quaint notions about Socialism. It will at least serve to prevent Labour Party readers of this journal from writing to us telling us that this time the Labour Party really does mean by Socialism what Socialists mean.

Mr. Attlee discusses what a future Labour Government would do about wages. First, in the "transition period," it would determine in relation to the national wealth "what wages should be paid to the workers in industry." Then civil servants and industrial workers "must stand together in their demand for a higher standard of life." (Mr. Attlee forgets to say what the workers are to do if a future Labour Government, like the last one, hears the workers "demanding" these things, but answers "No!")

Then, after the "transition period," a beginning is to be made with "socialisation" (Mr. Herbert Morrison's name for Public Utility Corporations). Then, says Mr. Attlee, the "problem of fixing remuneration will become acute," and the remedy is that "Socialists must aim at equalitarianism, although it may not be completely attainable for a considerable time."

Our progress, so far, may be summarised thus: First, a Labour Government, then an inquiry into how much wages the workers can be given, then "a considerable time" during which efforts will be made in the direction of equalitarianism, and of diminishing property incomes.

After this we might hope that Mr. Attlee will expect to have arrived at the desired goal, but what we find instead is that there will still be a wages system, and still, apparently, property incomes, albeit "diminished."

Mr. Attlee's followers, who have spent the past twenty or thirty years chasing after Post Office "Socialism" only to discover that it is "State capitalism," will spend another considerable span of life chasing after "socialisation," only to discover that it is Public Utility Corporations, and that the wages system and capitalism in general are still there.

It is a sure thing, if the workers allow this to happen, that when that further stage is reached, Mr. Attlee will be writing articles in the *Daily Herald* of that day, discovering new variations on the old theme.

### The Hard-Faced "Daily Herald"

Labour propagandists are fond of saying that the incursion of the publishing firm of Odhams into the Labour world (was it an incursion or an



annexation?) has revolutionised propaganda. It is certainly possible that the *Daily Herald's* rise to the position of the world's largest circulation, over two million copies a day, will help the Labour Party to round-up votes as never before, but there is a thorn to every rose, and one little thorn in the side of Labour Party propagandists is the fifteen per cent. dividend paid by Odhams. In the past the Labour Party has been able to denounce wicked bankers and hard-faced business-men for making an "unreasonable" profit. What will they say now? When the *Daily Herald* was from a profit-making point of view a flop it was all very well to throw stones, but fifteen per cent. is well above the average rate of profit of industrial and commercial concerns. It is more than most of the banks pay, and far higher than many of them.

Incidentally, Labour Party adherents of Major Douglas, who believe that the banks have it in their power to pay dividends of hundreds per cent., might explain how it is that most of them pay far less than Odhams.

\* \* \*

#### A Penny Bun for a Good Wage-Slave.

It is when our bosses are kind to us that we see what sort of cattle they think we are. On Saturday, August 18th, some charabancs were to be seen passing along the Thames embankment draped with huge posters, from which we learned that the animals inside were the salesmen of a certain textile firm who had come out top in a "trip-to-the-mills" contest. A present for white-collared Clarence Dubb for being a good boy, to go and inspect his strong-armed brother, Henry, in the mills. Then each group will be expected to derive satisfaction from not having to do the work done by the other, and both will return more contented to the task of making profits for the shareholders.

\* \* \*

#### Five, Ten, Fifteen, Twenty.

Somebody ought to make an inquiry into the methods by which the rulers in the various countries keep the workers more or less contented while giving them little else but promises of post-dated blessings. In particular, what is the merit of the five-year period that it should have found favour in so many countries? First, there are the five-year Parliaments in Great Britain, it being found that five years is about the longest period a British worker will tolerate the non-fulfilment of a promise of prosperity by any given gang of politicians—after five years he insists that it shall be unfulfilled by a different gang. Then there is little Father Stalin, whose great contribution to civilisation was the discovery that, if it is put over in a lot of pseudo-Socialist jargon, the five years

can be extended to two five-years, and the patient Russian can be kept docile with the promise of carrots, not after the first, but after the second five-year plan. If Professor Laski (an admirer of the Bolsheviks who has just visited Russia) is to be believed, the trick works with large numbers of the workers there. He writes (*Nation*, New York, July 18th):—

I doubt whether an unemployed English worker on the dole has a standard of life as low as lower-paid categories of Russian workmen in full employment. On the other hand, I was assured not only by Russians themselves, but by newspapermen who had lived in Russia for many years, that conditions are definitely better than at any time since 1917.

Russia is a land of hope. The masses have no doubt that the sacrifices of to-day will be justified by the achievements of to-morrow. The mental climate is one of intense exhilaration, of a buoyant and optimistic faith I have never before encountered.

Hitler looked across the frontier and is now going one better than Stalin. My German oxen, he says, are even more patient than your Russian ones. In the early days, before and just after the conquest of power, he promised to introduce Socialism almost immediately, and was asking to be crucified if he did not deliver the goods in five years. A year later, having seen that quite a lot of people are already asking for tangible results and may want to crucify him, he puts forward a plea in his election speech of August 17th for fifteen years in which to justify himself. After all, as Hitler says, the Social Democrats and other parties which shared in the Government of Germany since 1918 got away with it for fifteen years between them, why shouldn't he?

Mussolini appears to have worked on a different theory of kidding the workers. Having discovered in the Italian "left-wing" Labour movements how attractive to the average violent reformist are speeches about "ACTION," he worked out a formula which, so far, has never let him down. He proclaimed the dethronement of talk about theory, and enthroned in its place talk about action. After twelve years, a decreasing but still very large number of Italian workers are contented with it.

But black as it is, the outlook might be worse. We have not yet found a politician able to win an election on a programme of "Prosperity for Posterity: The Millennium in 150 years."

\* \* \*

#### Mr. Selfridge on Myths.

Every day in *The Times* and certain other papers there is a half-column of great thoughts inserted by Selfridge & Co., Ltd., and written by "Callisthenes." On August 16th "Callisthenes" discussed "The Great Equality Myth," and regretted that the doctrine of the equality of men is not declining as it ought to be. It would be unfair to hold "Callisthenes" responsible for all the

views expressed; doubtless he has to write what he thinks will please his employers. May we, first of all, however, disabuse him of the notion that the basis of the Socialist case is a belief that "all men are equal," and that "all people should work the same number of hours per week and get the same amount of money in return, the same amount of honour, the same number of the constituents of 'happiness.'" Strange as it may seem to "Callisthenes," if he listened to a member of the Socialist Party for a month he would hear never a word about any of these doctrines. Socialists are occupied with a very different matter, that is, the ownership and control of the means of production and distribution, including, of course, the stores, vehicles, plant and stock of Messrs. Selfridge & Co. What we want and are determined to get, not one day later than need be, is the abolition of the private ownership and control of these things, and their conversion into the common property of society. We shall then be as little concerned as "Callisthenes" as to whether A and B are each 5ft. 9ins. and measure 34ins. round the waist. When "Callisthenes" puts forward his employer's view about the nature of existing society, these ideas are as remote from reality as are his ideas of Socialism. There is, he tells us, a fundamental quality about men which gives each one "the capacity for earning money . . . in different degree." It is this, we are told, which accounts for economic inequality. This is, of course, not an original view. It is, on the contrary, very old, and it can be shown to be absurd by one simple feature of capitalism that may be observed every day. If Mr. Selfridge's wealth is due to his superior capacity for earning money (and not to his participation in the capitalist-class ownership of the means of life which compels propertyless workers to submit to exploitation at his hands), why is it that he and every other capitalist hangs on like grim death to his property and will never on any account risk his alleged superior capacity in competition with the workers? Why, in other words, does not Mr. Selfridge come out from behind the rampart of property which protects him and gives him privilege, and pit his brains against those of the lesser men?

The answer (not for publication in *The Times*) is that Mr. Selfridge is not such a damned fool as all that. He knows full well that a capitalist deprived of his property, even though allowed to keep his "superior brains," would be a shorn lamb defenceless against the cruel winds that assail the worker looking for work. Mr. Selfridge knows how much pleasanter it is to stick in the ranks of the privileged, where he never has to come into direct and brutal contact with the bread-struggle he finds so bracing for others, where he is flattered, guarded and coddled by servants and secretaries, every one of whom has to smile and jump to it

because he or she will otherwise get the sack. If Mr. Selfridge should some day meet his dear fellow members of the great firm on an equal footing, he might hear one or two blistering remarks about his canting "Callisthenes" and his playboy bugler who toots his wage-slaves on and off work morning and evening. H.

#### "The Western Socialist"

Published by the Socialist Party of Canada is obtainable from the Socialist Party of Canada, Manitoba Hotel, 194, Market Avenue East, Winnipeg, at five cents a copy; or at 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, at 2d. per copy (2½d. post free).

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#### "The Socialist Review."

Published by the Socialist Party of New Zealand is obtainable from T. J. Phillips, 16, Hawea Road, Point Chevalier, Auckland, W.3., or at 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1. Price 1d. per copy (1½d. post free).

#### THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY (U.S.A.)

Readers in U.S.A. are invited to communicate with the Workers' Socialist Party at 132, East 23rd Street, New York City, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

Readers in Canada are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of Canada at 194, Market Avenue, Winnipeg, where the WESTERN SOCIALIST and SOCIALIST STANDARD are obtainable.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND

Readers in New Zealand are invited to communicate with the Socialist Party of New Zealand. Secretary, T. J. Phillips, 16, Hawea Road, Pt. Chevalier, Auckland, W.3, where the SOCIALIST REVIEW and SOCIALIST STANDARD are obtainable.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

Readers in Australia are invited to communicate with the S.P. of Australia at Box 1440 P.O., Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, where the SOCIALIST STANDARD is obtainable. Lectures every Sunday night at 8 p.m. 122 Bourke Street, City. All welcome. Questions and discussions.

#### NEW SOUTH WALES

Readers in N.S. Wales are invited to communicate with the Secretary, 11 Wangee Road, Lakemba, N.S.W., for SOCIALIST STANDARDS and information.

#### SYDNEY.

Sydney branch meets alternate Mondays at Room 523, Rawson Chambers, Pitt Street, 7.30 p.m., for Branch business, followed by a lecture, questions and discussion. Meetings on 27th August, 10th and 24th September, etc.

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## Open Air Meetings

## SEPTEMBER

## Saturdays

The Grove, Hammersmith Broadway ... 8 p.m. Jolly Butcher's Hill, Wood Green ... 8 p.m.  
Rushcroft Road, Brixton, Opp. Lambeth Town Hall 7.30 p.m. West Green Corner, Tottenham ... 8 p.m.

## Sundays

	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th	Oct. 7th
Clapham Common	7 p.m. Banks.	Ross.	Grainger.	Isbitsky.	Waters.	Banks.
Finsbury Park	5.30 p.m. Ambridge.	Godfrey.	Isbitsky.	Cameron.	Walker.	Ginsberg.
Victoria Park	6 p.m. Wilmot.	Walker.	Cash.	Grainger.	Kohn.	Jacobs.
Brockwell Park	6 p.m. Jacobs.	Isbitsky.	Wilmot.	Ambridge.	Reginald.	Rubin.
Queen's Road, Bayswater, near Whiteley's	7.30 p.m. Turner.	Wilmot.	Ambridge.	Reginald.	Cash.	Kohn.
Cock Hotel, East Ham	7.30 p.m. Rubin.	Walker.	Jacobs.	Cash.	Butler.	Ambridge.
Liverpool Street, Walworth, Camberwell Gate	11.30 a.m. Grainger.	Banks.	Godfrey.	Walker.	Manion.	Kriefman.
Whipps Cross Corner	8 p.m. Ross.	Ambridge.	Waters.	Ginsberg.	Grainger.	Isbitsky.
Kenninghall Road (Lea Bridge Road end)	8 p.m. Waters.	Ginsberg.	Goldstein.	Butler.	Ambridge.	Cash.
Southend, Sea Front	7.30 p.m. Walker.	Goldstein.	Ross.	Russell.	Isbitsky.	Reginald.

**Sundays:** ... King's Hall Picture House, Bakers Arms, Leyton ... 12 a.m.  
**Mondays:** ... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8 ... 8 p.m.  
... Highbury Corner, N. ... 8 p.m.  
... "Heaton Arms," Rye Lane, Peckham, S.E. ... 8 p.m.  
**Tuesdays:** ... Clissold Corner, Albion Road, N.16 ... 8 p.m.  
**Wednesdays:** ... West Green Corner, Tottenham, N. ... 8 p.m.  
... Windsor Road, Forest Gate, E. ... 8 p.m.  
... "Prince of Wales," Harrow Road, W. ... 8 p.m.  
... Clock Tower, Avenue Road, Lewisham, S.E. ... 8 p.m.  
... "Chequers," Ripple Road, Dagenham ... 8 p.m.  
**Thursdays:** ... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8. ... 8 p.m.  
... "Salmon and Ball," Bethnal Green, E. ... 8 p.m.  
**Fridays:** ... Ilford Station, E. ... 8 p.m.

## BRANCH DIRECTORY

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.  
**BIRKENHEAD.**—Communications to H. Dawson, 26, Vulcan Street, Birkenhead, Cheshire.  
**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jasper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.  
**BLOOMSBURY.**—Branch meets every Monday at 7.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road.) Miss B. Foster, Sec., S.P.G.B., at above address.  
**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.  
**CHISWICK.**—(See West London).  
**DAGENHAM.**—Branch meets alternate Mondays (from August 6th) at 8 p.m., Pettits' Farm, Heathway. Sec. J. Oliver, 87, Rogers Road, Dagenham, Essex.  
**ECCELES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. LEA, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Lancs.  
**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place.  
**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month, 8 p.m., at 98 Naburn Street, Glasgow, C.5. Communications to M. Falconer at above address.  
**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Friday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Grave Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., D. Goldberg, 21, Bridge Street, E.9.  
**HULL.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at York Room, The Metropole. Communications to Sec., at 62, Ampleforth Grove, Willerby Road.  
**ILFORD.**—Branch meets Mondays at 8 p.m. at 13a, Richmond Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to Sec., H. S. Greenwood, at above address.  
**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to N. A. Bishop Argyle Court, 105, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Branch meets from 8 to 10 p.m. on Wednesday.  
**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., Mrs. E. C. Snell, 17, Theobald Road, E.17. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**MANCHESTER.**—Branch meets fortnightly (Mondays) as from 28 May, at Craigwell Restaurant, Peter Street (entrance in South Street). Sec., B. A. Lee, 19, Emery Avenue, Chorlton, Manchester.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets 8 p.m., 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, at 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Discussion at 9.30 p.m. Literature Sec., W. M. Veal, 73, Wornington Road, W.10.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., E. Boden, 96, Edgedale Road, Sheffield, 7. Branch meets alternate Mondays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 10, Friend's School, Hartahead.

**SOUTHEAST-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in the month, at 8 p.m. at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec. at above address.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover St., S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Sec., S. Goldstein, 18, Irene House, Flower & Dene Street, Stepney, E.1. Branch meets on Fridays, at 8 p.m., at Working Lads Institute (nr. Whitechapel Station).

**TOOTING.**—Communications to W. Mehew, 19, Littleton Street, S.W.18.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to A. Cash, Junr., 51 Morrison Avenue, N.17.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Branch meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. at the Workman's Hall (Room 2), High Street, E.17. Sec., Clifford Beloe, 158, Northcote Road, Walthamstow, E.17. Lecture and discussion on alternate Wednesdays.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WEST LONDON (Chiswick).**—Branch meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Chiswick Club, over 376, High Road, Chiswick, W.4. Communications to Sec., C. Curtis, 52, Parkstead Road, Putney, S.W.15.

**WEMBLEY.**—Communications to H. G. Holt, 28, Charterhouse Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex. Branch meets every Friday at 7.45 p.m. at Cafe-Restaurant over 170, High Road, Wembley.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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*Such is the operation of the present social system—on fraud and robbery legalised stand all its power, and wealth, and glory.*

J. F. BRAY.

## STEPPING STONES. FOR A NEW READER.

It is sometimes interesting to know how people of professional qualifications react to the SOCIALIST STANDARD when it is first brought to their notice. Those who have had the opportunity to do so must have been struck by the great similarity of opinions expressed by these people. Such expressions as—"the paper seems fascinated by the idea of capitalism," and "the statement in the Declaration of Principles referring to the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced is sheer nonsense," are not uncommon. Let us, therefore, endeavour to deal with these particular objections.

To a new reader it does, perhaps, seem that the SOCIALIST STANDARD is "fascinated by this

idea of capitalism," according to the rather sloppy wording of this particular objection. An inanimate object like a paper cannot, of course, be subject to the influence of fascination. What is undoubtedly meant is that there is throughout the SOCIALIST STANDARD a continual reference to capitalism as being the main cause of the evils

which exist to-day. Those evils are almost too well known to need recapitulation. They are—widespread poverty and semi-starvation in the midst of an abundance of wealth, lying advertisements—part of the enormously wasteful method of distribution, with its myriads of shops and salesmen and deliverers, the colossal waste of human effort in the building of battleships, aeroplanes and armaments, the fussy and useless activities in the circularizing of letters and the faking up of news as an adjunct to the advertisers, the waste of valuable human labour in ministering to the whims and caprices of wealthy idlers—these, and the evils which arise directly from poverty itself, such as prostitution, robberies and murders.

If capitalism is the cause of these evils, then it is obvious that any party which maintains that this is the case must constantly refer by name to that order of society. In all sciences there are words which indicate certain basic ideas or principles, and if any discussion upon any section of that particular science is to be understood at all, those words must be used whenever that particular idea or principle is referred to. For instance, in physiology one constantly has to refer to the heart and the circulation of the blood. In the same way, in sociology one has to refer to the elements which constitute a particular society, and the particular form of society in which we are living at the present time, and which therefore interests us the most, has been given the name of Capitalism. It is, therefore, frequently necessary to use this word, and no apology is required for doing so. It is perhaps unnecessary to add that the pro-capitalist *Morning Post* constantly refers to the existing form of society as Capitalism.

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That capitalism is the cause of the evils enumerated above, besides many others, has been abundantly proved in the previous issues of this journal. It is not proposed to go into this in detail here, but it is sufficient to point out that the characteristics of capitalism are—the private ownership of the means of production and the production of articles for profit. It is not very difficult to perceive that those evils arise from this fact of private ownership and the efforts by the few people who own them to dispose of those commodities.

"The consequent enslavement of the working class" is the next phrase which antagonizes our professional friends. Does it not logically follow that if the means of living are owned by one class, then any other class can have no other relation to the first class than that of slaves? But if logical deduction is not sufficient, then what are the facts? Unless he steals or begs, a person without capital has to work in order to live. He has to find a master. That master is generally some big combine or other. During the time that he is with that firm he has to work *hard*, he has to do what he is told, he frequently has to smile back when he is insulted, he is bullied, and if he dares to stand up for himself, he is sent forth to endure the torments of unemployment. He is now "free," but as it is difficult to live upon the dole, quick as thought he has to start searching for another master. Whilst he is on the dole he is constantly being summoned to the Exchange for his case to be "reviewed"; an investigator comes round to see if he has managed to put by any savings or if he has earned a few shillings surreptitiously, and if he has and has not disclosed it, then woe betide him. Is this man not a slave to the class which employs him and which, when he is out of work, administers the relief and the unemployment benefit?

It is, incidentally, of interest to note that the recent creation of a Central Assistance Board to control the local relieving authorities is in parallel with the development of capitalist industry. As capitalism becomes more centralised, the capitalists would not desire local relieving authorities, over whom they could not exercise direct control, to distribute scales of relief in excess of what they, in their just wisdom, might deem necessary.

The next phrase calling for comment is "the working class, by whose labour alone all wealth is produced." The professionals like to think of themselves as performing some useful function, and hence, no doubt, their objection to this phrase. Definition is, however, the starting point of any science, and if it is realized that by the working class is meant all those who are compelled to sell their mental and physical energy—what we Socialists term labour-power—in order to get a living, then it is obvious that this term includes

clerical and professional workers and scientists, and it cannot be denied that it is only the application of the energies of the workers to material supplied by Nature which results in the production of all present-day commodities.

The production of these commodities to supply human wants is of such a complicated nature that it can only be carried on by groups of men working together. The commodities which these workers have produced, however, do not belong to them, but to a group of anonymous capitalists who endeavour to dispose of the commodities. In times of trade depression the commodities cannot be sold, the men who have produced them are discharged, and are unable to obtain the very goods which they themselves have produced and of which they may be in sore need. There is, therefore, a disharmony in the mode of production brought about by—on the one hand—social production, and—on the other hand—private ownership of the means of production. Therefore, by abolishing private ownership and substituting for it social ownership, the disharmony is eliminated and mankind will then be able to lead a free and full life.

RAMO.

## Answers to Correspondents

### HAS RUSSIA "PRODUCTION FOR USE"?

A correspondent (S.N.), writing from Waihi, asks how the S.P.G.B. justifies its attitude towards Russia in face of the following statement made by an observer of Russian conditions:—

After all, there is nothing wonderful about these (Russia's) achievements. The simple and sufficient explanation is that in a mad world, one country is acting rationally—and is planning her industry and producing for use not for profit.

The name of this observer is not given, but whoever he is, his observation is very much at fault. Nobody denies that the output of Russian industry has increased, but that can be said of many countries which make no claim to being anything but capitalistic. Whether or not those in charge of Russia can be said to be acting "rationally" depends on the point of view. From one angle it has been said that since Socialism in Russia is at present, and for many years to come, an impossibility, it is wise to come to terms with the capitalist world and enter into the mad scramble for markets which is a feature of world capitalism. At any rate, that is what Russia is doing. One outstanding instance of this is the enormous efforts Russia is making to develop the production of gold. The July issue of the *Monthly Review* of the Moscow Narodny Bank (an official Soviet institution), publishes an article on gold production, from which we learn that the output of gold has been advancing rapidly. In December, 1933, it was nearly twice as great as in

December, 1932, and a further great increase is planned. Russian gold output in 1933 was second largest in the world, being beaten only by Transvaal. The writer of the article in the *Bank Review* (A. Serebrovsky—chairman of the Central Administration of the Russian Government Gold Trust), holds out the hope that "in the near future the U.S.S.R. will assume first place in the world as a gold-producing country."

Is this rational, except on a purely capitalist basis? Of course it is not, and the Bolsheviks knew this well enough not so long ago. Did not Lenin tell us that under Socialism gold would no doubt be used for the construction of street lavatories?

Again, this observer is quite wrong about Russia producing for use. Production for use (and this, too, the Bolsheviks once knew quite well) involves the abandonment of buying and selling, and profit-making. In Russia, however, goods are not produced for use but for sale, at a profit. The first charge on Russian industry is to meet the enormous cost (upwards of £100 millions a year) of the interest payments to the bondholders (mainly Russian citizens) who have invested money in the loans continually being raised by the Russian Government.

Quite unintentionally a pro-Bolshevik observer, Mr. Louis Fischer, who for years represented American newspapers in Moscow, showed the capitalist character of Russia in a recent article called "In Russia, Life grows Easier." He wrote: "The food situation, too, is much better than it was last winter. There is scarcely anything one cannot buy—if one has the money." (*Nation*, New York, June 13th, 1934. Italics ours.)

That is not production for use but production for sale, as in other capitalist countries, "to those who have the money." ED. COMM.

### SOCIALISM AND MOTOR CARS.

A correspondent (W. E. B. Acton) puts the following question:—

Under Socialism, as we understand it, equal distribution of the world's wealth will be put into operation. What will happen if everyone desires a motor-car?

The correspondent tells us that this is one of many questions put to him by work-mates of his, this particular question being put by a follower of Lord Beaverbrook. To students of capitalism the question is interesting as an example of the way private ownership and profit-seeking muddle and distort every issue. Lord Beaverbrook is an intelligent and experienced man, yet he will trot out infantile conundrums like this under the impression he is dealing with one of the important problems which will face Socialist society.

Socialism does not mean "equal distribution." It does not mean "dividing up." It means a

system of society based on common ownership and democratic control of the means of production and distribution. It means that society as a whole will tackle the job of producing what society as a whole wants, limited, of course, by the then existing powers of production and by the number of hours it is considered desirable to spend at production. "What will happen under Socialism if everyone desires a motor-car?" is a question which we could only answer if we knew the power of production prevailing at that time.

If the powers of production will not permit of one car per head except at considerable sacrifice of production in other fields, then people will democratically decide whether or not they are prepared to make this sacrifice. In this case, as in all other cases, they will choose between alternatives in the light of their most pressing desires unless and until the powers of production have developed to the point where such a choice of alternatives is no longer necessary.

In any case, we must beware of foisting our own needs and aspirations under capitalism upon people living under the very different social conditions of Socialism. It is highly improbable that everybody under Socialism would want a car. In fact, it is certain that many will not. The utility of a car lies in its convenience for business and pleasure; but undoubtedly, too, part of the joy of possessing a car to-day lies in the social prestige it gives a man among his neighbours. As under Socialism this will be lacking, people are far more likely to make use, for travelling, of a clean, pleasant, rapid and conveniently-run traffic system, which is not beyond the wit of man to devise. Alternatively, to the extent that cars might be preferred, they could (though we do not claim that they will) be taken from a depot when wanted and returned when finished with—a method far superior to the wasteful and cumbrous system whereby each and every individual kept and maintained his own individual car. ED. COMM.

### MR. HODGSON THROWS UP THE SPONGE.

We have received a letter from Mr. J. L. Hodgson referring to the article and reply to him published in the September SOCIALIST STANDARD. Mr. Hodgson's letter is as follows:—

Eggington, Beds.  
September 3rd, 1934.

To the Editor of the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Dear Sir,

On page 6 of your issue of September 6th you say that my theory of constant nullification of *rapidly increasing* productivity demands evidence of *rapidly increasing* waste outside industry. In my book, and in the summarised list of *communal wastes* which I give in your August issue, I have indicated some of these rapidly increasing wastes for those who care to note them. I would add to the list previously given (1) many of the complex ways of doing quite simple things which the engineer is, under the existing system, continually compelled to devise, and (2) the



increasing amount of time devoted to political controversy and its various reactions.

On page 7 you ask how I propose to distribute purchasing power (in goods) as a gift without taking it (goods) away from those who have it (them). Again I reply for the last time, "By reducing the leaks," i.e., the communal wastes. When you feed fish, that would otherwise be thrown back into the sea, to starving people, you don't "take away" from those previously privileged to enjoy the fish that the present system allows to be distributed.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN L. HODGSON.

#### Reply.

While, in form, Mr. Hodgson's letter is an attempt to answer the criticisms made of his arguments, its omissions indicate clearly enough that Mr. Hodgson is totally unable to provide the evidence to back up his claims.

He completely ignores the request that has now been repeated about half a dozen times for evidence of output per man increasing "from 50 to 3,000 times," and ignores the challenge for evidence of rapidly increasing waste. Instead, he offers us a simple list of items of waste, without the slightest attempt to evaluate them and show that they are, in fact, rapidly increasing. The list was published in the August SOCIALIST STANDARD (page 185). It includes the following: mass unemployment, strikes, lack of zeal on the part of the workers, "most advertising activities," exports not paid for, "most ticket-collecting," etc. Mr. Hodgson affects to believe that the mere mention of these forms of real or alleged waste is sufficient to prove his claim that waste is increasing with stupendous rapidity. (How stupendous can be gauged from Mr. Hodgson's contentions that productivity has increased "from 50 to 3,000 times," and that the increase of waste swallows up nine-tenths of the increase). The answer to Mr. Hodgson is that there is not the slightest reason to believe that these forms of waste, in the aggregate, are increasing at more than a very slow rate (if at all) in relation to the amount of wealth produced. Some of the most important items are known to be decreasing at the present time. The number of strikes and their duration have declined very substantially during the past 30 years. Ticket-collecting and advertising may be increasing, but any increase is trivial in relation to the alleged stupendous increase in output claimed by Mr. Hodgson. Exports not paid for may be waste from the point of view of the exporting capitalist, but that loss is offset by the gain to the foreign buyers who did not pay. Lastly, unemployment is not only less than it was a year ago, here and all over the world, but is less than it was at the peak of the crisis 12 years ago. And this is the kind of material Mr. Hodgson says is evidence of rapidly increasing waste! The only explanation is that Mr. Hodgson must have worked out his other estimates as he did his estimate of unemploy-

ment, by calmly adding in the "temporarily stopped" workers twice.

Mr. Hodgson now explains how he is going to distribute purchasing power without taking it away from those who have it. His explanation is that goods which would otherwise be destroyed will be given to the starving. The first point Mr. Hodgson overlooks is that goods destroyed by capitalists are their own private property. The second point is that they have a very real interest in destroying them as against giving them away.

The destruction of fish when the market is glutted prevents prices from being forced down. If the fish were given away to the unemployed, they would, of course, immediately stop spending any of the unemployment pay on buying fish, to the obvious detriment of the interests of the fish owners. The latter will therefore strenuously object to Mr. Hodgson's plan to deprive them of their property, for the reason we have previously given and which Mr. Hodgson has hitherto denied, i.e., that distributing purchasing power to those who lack it means taking it away from those who have it.

It may be useful, in conclusion, to summarise the major points of this controversy. Mr. Hodgson claims, but declines to give evidence of, a vast general increase of productivity per head. He also fails to give evidence either of a considerable increase in the total output of industry, or of a considerable decrease in the number of workers required to produce the former volume of output. Lastly, he asks us to take his word that there is a stupendous increase of waste, but here again he declines to produce evidence.

If Mr. Hodgson ever thinks he is able to produce evidence in support of any of these claims our columns are, of course, open to him.

ED. COMM.

#### DONATIONS

The following is a list of donations received to August 31st:—

##### GENERAL FUND.

C. & G., £2 3s. 8d.; W.C.F., 1s. 4d.; S.B., 3d.; G. Reid, 1s. 9d.; J.H., 5s. 0d.; Watson, 2s. 6d.; G.C., 2s. 9d.; G.F.H., 2s. 2d.; F.L.R., 5s.; L.H.H., 17s. 6d.; W.W., 9d.; G.H.C., 2s. 6d.; J.C., 1s.; F.J.H., £1; A.N., £1; G.B., 10s.; West Ham Branch, £5; J.J., 1s. 7d.; K.P.B., 1s. 3d.; A.B.D., 7s. 6d.; J.W., 1s. 8d.; H.W., 1s.; K.G., 5s.; Mr. F., 2s. 6d.; J.E.W., 7s. 6d.; T.C.R., 1s.; J.C., 6d.; J.Ce., 2s. 6d.; D.A.P., 11d.; D., 2s.; J.O., 1s. 6d.; Birmingham, £1.

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H.C., 1s.; F.W.K., 10s.; J.C., 5s. 6d.; W.T.O., 1s.; Tooting 8, 13s.; Conference, £3 13s. 4d.; West Ham 53, 18s. 10d.; T.J., 1s.; E.P., 17s.; Southend 25, 10s.; A.W., 10s.; J.M.G., 1s.; Leyton, 18s. 3d.; J.C., 1s.; O.R.J., 1s.; H.S., 2s. 6d.; Wood Green 11, 2s.; Paddington 20, 2s. 2d.; Stepney 7, 5s. 6d.; H.M., 4s. 6d.; G.R.J., 1s.; J.D., 1s. 6d.; Tooting Branch, 6s. 3d.; G.R., 2s. 6d.; Manchester, 10s. 6d.; West Ham 53, £1 6s.; Ditto 54, 8s. 2d.; Ditto 67, 6d.; Ditto 69, 2s. 6d.; Wembley 26, 19s. 6d.; D.B., 2s.; E.P., 10s.; A.H.S., 3s.; D.B., 3s.; W.G., 1s.; J.O., 10s.; L.A.M., 2s.; H. Branch, 3s. 9d.

## Socialism and Land Ownership

The Socialist indictment of modern society is as plain and logical in meaning as any postulate of a political party might well be. It is that the means that human society requires to produce and distribute its wealth are privately owned by a mere portion of the population. The number which makes up this section of society is of little importance; it is the bare fact of sectional or private ownership which stands out as the supreme factor in the indictment. The means of living to-day are the land, mines, mills, factories, means of transport, machinery, and all such agents of wealth production and distribution essential to the economic needs of human society.

By common consent, those who own these are known as the capitalist or employing class, and this class owes its social position not merely to its ownership of the world's economic resources, but by virtue of the existence of another class in society, namely, the working class. Generally speaking, this class owns nothing but their physical and mental capabilities, their social status being a property-less one. Such small amounts of property or investments in savings banks, etc., owned by a portion of the working class are a negligible factor to seriously consider when assigning their position in relationship to that of the capitalist class, with its enormous wealth and power.

Denied access to the use of the powers of production, except upon certain terms to suit capitalist requirements, the workers are compelled, in order to live, to carry out the necessary functions in wealth production with only such a portion of the wealth allowed them as will secure their continued working efficiency. As a class the capitalists produce no wealth, but they own it when produced; the workers produce the wealth, but have to eke out a poverty existence throughout their entire lifetime. This system of society is one of slavery—wage-slavery—just as real in its effects as the economic servitude of the feudal serf or that of the chattel slave of old.

When Shakespeare made old man Shylock chant his personal plaint against Portia's judgment—

Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that: you take my house when you do take the prop that doth sustain my house: you take my life when you take the means whereby I live.—

he made Shylock express a fact of profound sociological significance when applied to society based upon private property in the means of living. For, given the power to privately own the means by which any section of humanity obtains its living, the enslavement of those who are without those means follows as a logical and social conse-

quence. Not only this, but it confers upon those who thus enslave the power to say yea or nay to the mode of living that may be sought at any time by those who are enslaved. These may be repressed and even starved into submission at the least sign of revolt to obtain a better standard of living. An important point this in the Socialist case. The poverty and generally insecure position of the workers is an anomalous feature of modern society, but the mere fact of the existence of a dominant class who may determine what is produced, how it shall be produced, and even whether wealth may not be produced or distributed at any given time is one of the leading counts in the Socialist position.

The Socialist challenges that power at every step of the way, no matter what measures of so-called social amelioration may be established within the domain of capitalist society. We urge the working class to organize to abolish capitalism, by and through the control of the political machinery, and thence to convert the entire forces of production and distribution into common or social property. We insist that historical development of human society has made this step an imperative one on the part of the working class. There is no other way out if the workers are to obtain the fruits of their labour and to determine their mode of living in accordance with the best that the associated efforts of humanity can produce.

This, in brief, is our case, and it cannot be refuted. The class division in modern society is fundamentally economic in character, and has been so throughout historic times. All the old anti-Socialist pronouncements concerning the "superior brains" and innate "directing ability" of those who rule and have ruled in the past are of no avail against the analysis which reveals that class differences are accounted for by the ownership or otherwise of the means of living.

"One thing, however, is clear," says Marx, "Nature does not produce on the one side owners of money or commodities, and on the other men possessing nothing but their own labour-power." And the same may be said of every other division in society prior to the capitalist form.

However, there are some people who profess to accept the main outline of the above position and yet would divert the interest and attention of the workers from the task of its realisation. At the moment we deal with but one of these diverting agencies.

Recently we were asked to send a representative of the Socialist Party to state its case before a meeting of the "English league of land tax values." The request was complied with, and a considerable discussion took place; one result being that a representative of that organisation paid a return visit to state the case for land tax values at a meeting of the Socialist Party.



Mr. Andrew Maclaren, formerly Member of Parliament for Burslem, was the speaker in question; his entire position amounting to a declaration that in the process of the exploitation of the workers, the land owner is the "villain of the piece." Land monopoly, according to him, is the basic anomaly of present-day society, against which the exploitation by the capitalist pales into insignificance. Singularly enough, the writings of Marx were quoted as a means of bolstering up part of this position.

Students of sociology are well aware of the means by which the foundations of capitalism were laid; chief among these being the expropriation of the mass of the people from the soil. This historical process has been analysed by Marx in "Capital" (Vol. I), where can be found numerous facts taken from historical records on the spoliation of the peasantry from the 15th on to the 19th centuries. Whilst this process went on throughout Europe, particular reference is made to England, the "classic land of capital." Marx summarised his account as follows:—

Thus were the agricultural people forcibly expropriated from the soil, driven from their homes, turned into vagabonds, and then whipped, branded, tortured by laws grotesquely terrible, into the discipline necessary to the wage system.

Well and truly does the same writer say of this history that it "is written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire."

Once driven from the land, their sole source of livelihood, the mass of the peasantry were forced into the towns, there to offer their bodily powers to whomsoever had need of them. The servitude of the expropriated peasantry was the vital requirement of capitalist development.

"The starting point that gave rise to the wage-labourer," says Marx, "as well as to the capitalist, was the servitude of the labourer."

However, this historical record is seized upon by Mr. Maclaren and his fellow advocates of "land tax values" to mean something totally different from the Socialist conclusions stated by Marx. These people argue that unless people are divorced from the land capitalism cannot exist. But this is only another way of saying that if the essential conditions of capitalist society are non-existent, then capitalism cannot exist, which is pure tautology, conveying little or no intelligence whatever.

By way of emphasising the land taxers' point of view, Mr. Maclaren makes special reference to Marx's chapter on the "Modern theory of Colonisation." Here Marx quotes E. G. Wakefield, who saw clearly enough that the property-less condition of the worker was absolutely essential to the growth of capitalism in the colonies as elsewhere. Wakefield's statement, as reproduced in

"Capital," is as follows:—

Where land is very cheap and all men are free, where every one who so pleases can easily obtain a piece of land for himself, not only is labour very dear, as respects the labourer's share of the produce, but the difficulty is to obtain combined labour at any price. ("Capital," Vol. I, Glaisner Edition, 1912, page 794.)

This, of course, is perfectly true, as those who endeavoured to carry on the usual capitalist mode of exploitation in the colonies in the early part of the 19th century found to their cost.

But all this does not help the land taxer in the slightest way to unravel the problem of the way out of the conditions of capitalist society, as they confront the working class. Nor was the historical account of the coming of capitalism given by Marx intended to mean that in the process of the modern capitalist mode of exploiting the workers the land owner is the chief culprit.

On the contrary, Marx's writings clearly indicate that land owning as a dominant social status declined with the final breakdown of feudal society and the imposition of capitalism on its ruins. The industrial capitalist, employing many hundreds or thousands of workers, has supplanted the feudal over-lord. To-day the workers enter the spheres of production, etc., not merely on "the land," but in vast factories or mills where they are exploited by the owners of giant machinery and the various appliances necessary to the output of wealth. The immediate employer or capitalist is the exploiter of the workers he engages. He has to hand back to them, in the form of money—wages only a portion of the value of their product. The remainder is his own property immediately considered; but, as is well known, he may not own the land or the factory where his production takes place, hence he is compelled to pay rent for the privilege of using these to their owners. From out of what does he pay? Answer, out of the unpaid labour of the workers. From the surplus left over after the wage bill of the workers has been met, a portion of the wealth may be handed to the landlord, and still another portion to the lender of money.

But where, however, our capitalist owns his own factory site and does not have recourse to loans of money whereby interest charges have to be met, he takes and holds the surplus himself. The all-important point to the workers is that no matter which position applies, it would not matter a brass farthing to their position as an exploited class.

Even were it possible to tax the holders of land out of existence, as the land tax advocates insist, it would solve no problem towards social ownership, such as we Socialists are seeking to establish.

To levy taxation at all, the control of the political machinery is necessary. The control of this machinery, which includes the armed forces, is insisted upon by the Socialist Party, not for purposes of taxation but to socialise the whole of

the forces of wealth production and distribution in the interest of all.

We hope with time, space and inclination, to discuss other aspects of the question at a later date. ROBERTUS.

## Forgotten Objections to Socialism

Time brings many changes, and among them a reversal in the attitude of the firmest opponents of Socialism towards their strongest objections.

Not so very long ago "leaders" of industry looked with bitter antagonism at any suggested interference in industry by the State. Socialism was opposed partly on the ground, so they said, that it represented such State interference. Nowadays, however, national governments (Fascist and otherwise) are glorified just on account of this State interference, and in industry after industry, leading representatives appeal to the State power to take action in one or another direction.

The old ideas of free competition have become obsolete, and the arguments built upon them have been forgotten by the anti-Socialist. Endeavours are common now to obtain agreements between sections (with government assistance) for the restriction of output or the destruction of surpluses, and for other varieties of a process which aims at balancing production against consumption.

It used to be urged that Socialists proposed providing people with uniform clothes and uniform houses. Governmental housing schemes have been a common feature of the last decade, and the objections made by supporters of capitalism have been that the schemes are not large enough or thorough enough.

The Nazis and the Fascists, the most thorough-going opponents of Socialism, have so far forgotten the "uniform" objection of the past that they want to dress us in shirts that only differ in colour from country to country.

How often have we heard, in days gone by, Socialism likened to the alleged paternalism of the Incas of Peru. But our paternal governments appoint officials to make sure that the unemployed have no savings hidden away, that we cross the roads at right places, that we truly inform them of what money we earn, that we properly cover our nakedness, and in many other ways display an inquisitorial interest in our private affairs.

From childhood onwards we are taught to appreciate how much we depend upon "great men" in all spheres of life, and we are urged to place our trust in them as leaders of thought and industry. But as soon as a "great man" loses his place, the public Press is full of vilifications of him. Whether he be a politician, a general, an admiral, an

industrial magnate or an artist, it does not matter, he is torn to pieces in print. Those who escape this fate when alive are usually subjected to the process when dead, as witness the voluminous literature in the form of memoirs, letters, and so forth published every year.

And so the hens come home to roost, but the fact is usually forgotten, and the objections to Socialism to-day will become the bulwarks of capitalism to-morrow. GILMAC.

## MEETINGS, LECTURES, &c.

**WEDNESDAY LECTURES, WALTHAMSTOW.**—Lectures will be given on Wednesday evenings, at 8 p.m., at Workmen's Hall, High Street, E.17. Oct. 3rd, "Dialectical Materialism," Wilnot; Oct. 17th, "The Marxian Theory of Surplus Value," Goldstein; Oct. 31st, "The Transitional Period," Cash. Admission free, non-members invited. Questions and discussion.

**MONDAY LECTURES, BLOOMSBURY.**—Lectures are given each Monday, at 8.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C.1. Oct. 1st, "The Chartist Movement," Lake; Oct. 8th, "Our Attitude Toward Russia," Isbitsky; Oct. 15th, "The Trump Card of the Working Class," Lester; Oct. 22nd, "Socialism and Parliament," Waite; Oct. 29th, "The Religion and Customs of the Jews," Goldstein. Non-members invited, admission free. Questions and discussion.

**SUNDAY LECTURES, HEAD OFFICE.**—Lectures are given each Sunday evening at 8 p.m., at 42 Great Dover Street, S.E.1. Oct. 7th, "What is the Class Struggle," S. Goldstein; Oct. 14th, "Psychology of War and Socialism," I. Ginsberg; Oct. 21st, "Communist Party and the Class Struggle," S. Cash; Oct. 28th, "Common Ownership of the Means of Life," S. Stewart; Nov. 4th, "The Chartist Movement," E. Lake.

**EDUCATIONAL COURSE FOR PARTY MEMBERS.**—The classes about which particulars were given in the September "S.S." began on Sunday, Sept. 23rd. They take place each Sunday afternoon from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Tea is obtainable from 6 p.m. Oct. 7th, "Primitive Society," Lester; Oct. 14th, "Slave Civilisations," Gilmac; Oct. 21st, "Feudalism," Goldberg; Oct. 28th, "Merchant Capitalism," Kohn; Nov. 4th, "The Reformation and the Puritan Revolution," Kohn.

**FRIDAY LECTURES, ISLINGTON.**—Lectures will be held on alternate Fridays, as follows, at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, under the auspices of the Islington Branch: Oct. 12th, "Why we Oppose all other Political Parties," Com. Ross; Oct. 26th, "Superstitions Old and New," Com. Sandy; Nov. 9th, "Trade Unionism and Socialism," Com. Wiltshire. Commence 8 p.m. Questions and discussion. Admission free.

**SUNDAY LECTURES, LEYTON BRANCH.**—Grove House, High Road, Leyton, at 7.30 p.m. Oct. 7th, "Prospects for the Revolution," Gilmac; Oct. 14th, "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," Isbitsky; Oct. 21st, "The Revolutionary Proposition," Ambridge; Oct. 28th, "1848," Reginald. All invited, admission free. Questions and discussion.

**FRIDAY LECTURES, WOOD GREEN BRANCH.**—Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Oct. 5th, "The Present System of Society—Where it Fails," Robertus; Nov. 2nd, "The Class Struggle—What is it?" A. C. Omrade. Admission free, non-members particularly invited. Questions and discussion. Commence 8 p.m.

**FRIDAY LECTURES, HACKNEY.**—Lectures will be given at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9, on Friday evenings at 8.30 p.m. Oct. 5th, "Feudalism," D. Goldberg; Oct. 12th, "Ancient Society," C. Lester; Oct. 19th, "Socialism and Revolution," S. Goldstein; Oct. 26th, "Socialism and Religion," J. Walker. Admission free, non-members invited. Questions and discussion.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OCTOBER,



1934

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

### TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Twelve Months, post free .. .. .	2s. 6d.
Six Months, post free .. .. .	1s. 3d.

## Trade Unionists in Conclave

The annual conference of the Trades Union Congress took place this year at Weymouth under the chairmanship of Mr. Andrew Conley.

This year's conference followed the trend of those of late years. The Government of the day was roundly condemned alike for the things that it has done and for the things it has left undone, and resolutions were passed recommending numerous reforms. All of which is to be expected of trade union conferences. This conference, however, was probably rescued from boredom by a provocative address by the chairman, a discussion on the bogey of Fascism, and another on war and the general strike.

Speaking on the conference resolution for a forty hours week, Mr. Conley said: "Trade unionism may yet have to use more drastic means of making effective its demand for this reform—and other of its claims. We may have to resort to other methods if the Government and the private interests which keep it in power continue to stand in the way. I am not using the language of menace but stating the conclusions which responsible officers of the trade unions are being driven to by the pressure of events. Many of us are being compelled to ask ourselves whether the best use is made in existing circumstances of the tremendous powers resident in our trade union organisation. The presentation and prosecution of wage claims, claims for shorter working hours, and other measures of general industrial application have been left to individual unions to press forward in limited application to their own industries or trades. Is it not wise and timely to consider the simultaneous

presentation to employers in all industries of a carefully planned programme of wage increases, and a standard of working hours which each union or group of unions, with the assistance and guidance of the General Council, can make a matter of negotiation in the trades with which they are concerned?

"Piece-meal wage movements are on foot. They are backed by the argument that more spending power must become available in the hands of the wage-earning class, to lift the standard of life and to bring consumption up to the level of productive capacity. These sporadic and unco-ordinated movements should be linked together in a disciplined and ordered effort to carry the unions forward as a united body. No infringement of the autonomy of unions is involved here. It is the logical next step in the development of the powers of this congress. The functions of leadership and unification of policy which congress expects its general council to exercise, find their justification here."

The above is worth its lengthy quotation. It is an attitude uncommon at the moment among trade union leaders, for it has been interpreted by the Press as logically leading to a threat of a general strike. This may or may not be the logic of Mr. Conley's position. It does, however, reflect an increased aggressiveness among trade unionists, which in its turn reflects the increase in trade and production. There is less pre-occupation with the "crisis" and more inclination to regard the employer as the enemy, a greater disposition to press for concessions and less of the attitude of "peace in industry." Nevertheless, Mr. Conley would have improved upon the situation had he anticipated in his argument the simultaneous refusal by employers when faced with the threatened "simultaneous presentation to employers in all industries of a carefully planned programme of wage increases." Remembering the back-door tricks of the T.U.C. in the so-called general strike of 1926, many trade unionists will await with interest to see whether Mr. Conley and "other responsible officers" will make their views heard on the General Council in the near future.

Conference developed discussion on the general strike in dealing with a decision of the last Labour Party conference calling upon the trade unions to call a general strike in the event of war. The subject was the kind to bring politicians to their feet. For example, Mr. Clynes: "Did the critics mean that under no circumstances should they offer resistance to an aggressor threatening to destroy democratic institutions?" Shades of 1914 and the "War to save democracy," and twenty years later a trade union leader before an audience of working men and women can get away with the melodramatic suggestion that an "enemy" capitalist goes to war with "our" capitalist

because he is anxious to destroy our democratic institutions. Mr. Bevin favoured deciding on a "course of action when the danger was on them." Others favoured the point of view that a war

of defence against an "aggressor nation" was justifiable. The *Daily Herald*, on this point, suggested that there is "little likelihood that Britain would be an aggressor country." Is the inference obvious? Is the *Daily Herald* preparing a defence for a future Labour Government that might find war "justifiable"? It seemed to occur to no delegate to question whether a general strike would be successful in preventing war, or what possible benefit it would be for the working-class to fight in any war to further capitalist interests. The motion calling for a general strike was defeated and the conference contented itself with the motion that the "General Council would call a meeting to decide what action it would take if war was declared."

The capitalist class will, we think, lose no sleep over the possibility. The *Daily Telegraph*, September 7th, without conscious irony, pointed out that on July 31st, 1914, on the eve of the late War, the late Mr. Keir Hardie and Mr. Arthur Henderson issued, on behalf of the British section of the International Socialist Bureau, a flaming appeal to the British working-class. It ended: "Down with class rule! Down with the rule of

brute force! Down with war! Up with the peaceful rule of the people!" Hardly had the ink dried before the official Labour Party and Trade Union movement were enthusiastically supporting the War.

And later, Mr. Henderson "downed" those who made themselves a nuisance to the capitalists by recommending obstinate strikers for deportation.

In the debate on the proposal for raising the school leaving age to sixteen years, leaders of religious organisations came in for some criticism because of their sectarian differences. No mention was made of the fact that the Labour Government's bill for raising the school leaving age to fifteen years was prevented from becoming law because of the opposition of religionists within the Labour Party, led by the late Mr. John Scurr, then Labour M.P. for Mile End.

Likewise, the new Unemployment Insurance Act, which, though differing only in minor points from the Act which was in force during the period of the Labour Government, was described as a "slave bill."

The affiliated membership of the T.U.C. was given as 3,294,581, a decrease on last year's figures of 73,330. It was pointed out, however, that the decrease has now fallen off, and an actual increase taking place. Moreover, it was stated that, as affiliation fees are based upon the membership of individual unions, these unions tend to be conservative in their estimated membership, owing to financial difficulties due to prolonged unemployment.

This year's conference gave no signs of having got any nearer to the Socialist understanding of capitalism than former conferences.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



## Where the Labour Parties Fail

### An Australian Episode

Judging by some of the questions asked by the readers of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD, there are still in existence in Britain and elsewhere a number of people who, while quite genuine in their belief in, and desire for, Socialism, are of the opinion that it can best be achieved by working in, and supporting the Labour Parties.

The following brief account of the history of what is known as the "Socialisation Movement," inside the Australian Labour Party in New South Wales, should be of interest to these readers, and should help to clear their minds on this point and to demonstrate beyond doubt the truth of the position put forward by Socialists.

In order to put the facts clearly before those readers not acquainted with Australian conditions, it is first necessary to indicate briefly the history, objects and organisational characteristics of the Australian Labour Party (A.L.P.).

This organisation first came into prominence after the failure of the great Maritime Strike of 1890, and the Shearers' and Miners' Strikes of the following two years. Having failed on the industrial field, the workers of that time determined to seek redress for their grievances by the Parliamentary method—by the capture and use of political power.

The rise of the A.L.P. and the growth of Australian industrial capitalism (as opposed to the great importing and shipping interests) have been simultaneous and synonymous, the one consistent policy of the Labour Party being high protection for home industries. This policy enabled them during the period of capitalist expansion here, to appeal successfully to the people, exploiting Australian patriotic sentiment and using as their chief bait the promise of high tariffs to the rising manufacturers, and high wages and good conditions to the workers.

It should be thoroughly understood that, unlike the Labour Party of Great Britain, the A.L.P. has no so-called Socialist parties affiliated to it, and the movement here described was an integral part of the party itself.

The A.L.P. is composed of branches of the party proper organised upon the usual territorial basis and of members of trade unions affiliated thereto.

The supreme body of the party is the Annual General Conference held yearly every Easter at the Sydney Trades Hall, but is preceded by two so-called provincial conferences at which representatives of the Metropolitan and Country membership meet separately and discuss the matter to be brought before the Easter Conference. Matters passed by

these two preliminary meetings are then considered by the Easter Conference and do not become operative unless agreed to there.

The members of the Central Executive, which is supreme between conferences, are elected by ballot of the branches on a basis of district representation and by affiliated unions according to the trade union groups, the executive officers only being elected by Conference itself.

The party had self-governing sections in all States of the Australian Commonwealth loosely unified by a Federal Executive and Conference representative of the various States, but in practice controlled by Parliamentarians. In the Federal Elections in 1929 the Scullin Labour Government was returned to power with an overwhelming majority, and there began the greatest display of Labour Party political imbecility and impotence ever seen.

The Federal Government was divided into two factions, the majority being supporters of Scullin and the Federal Executive, and the minority, the New South Wales representatives, supporting J. T. Lang and the bureaucracy of the Sydney Trades Hall. Faced with a position which no reform could adjust in a manner advantageous to the working class, they failed even to make a determined attempt to apply their own pet solution, reform of the Commonwealth Bank.

The division within the Party became a complete split and the sorry farce was ended when the N.S.W. (Lang) representatives collaborated with the Nationalists (the Australian equivalent of the Conservatives) and defeated the Government.

At the ensuing elections, December, 1931, the Labourites were overwhelmingly defeated and a breach was left between the Labour Party of N.S.W. and those of other States, which still remains.

### The So-called Socialisation Movement.

At the Easter Conference of 1930, due to the efforts of a small group of alleged Socialists headed by Mr. W. McNamara, a resolution was passed to appoint a "Socialisation Committee of Seven" to propagate the Socialisation of Industry.

The Committee was appointed and functioned to such purpose that, at the Conference following (Easter, 1931) resolutions were passed altering the objective of the Party to "The Socialisation of Industry; Production, Distribution and Exchange"; to exact a pledge to "actively support and advocate Socialisation" from Labour Parliamentary and Municipal representatives (honoured throughout, more in the breach than in the observance); gave instruction to form classes "to study the principles of Socialisation," instructed the A.L.P. Executive that there must be intensive Socialisation propaganda at all times (election as well as other times); and finally decided "That

the Conference instructs the Executive, Parliamentary representatives, branches, affiliated unions and individual members to exert their energies towards the accomplishment of Socialisation." Of course, although the word socialisation is used, this new movement never properly grasped the Socialist case, or advocated the Socialist remedy.

On April 4th, 1931, in time for the opening of the above Conference, the Committee published the first issue of its monthly organ, *The Socialisation Call*, which, ably written and conducted, issued an appeal to delegates to support the Committee; published an article by Labour Senator Arthur Rae, which closed as follows:—

"In conclusion, I would urge that the Socialisation of Industry is a work on which we should concentrate all the energies of our movement, and if the remainder of the platform was relegated to the scrap-heap, no one would be a penny the worse."

The same issue reprinted an editorial from the *Labour Daily*, which, owned co-operatively by the Trade Unions, but actually controlled by J. T. Lang, is regarded as Labour's official mouthpiece. Extracts from the article, which fairly state its purpose, are as follows:—

"As things are when some of these leaders do have occasion to refer to the objective of the Labour movement, it is with a semi-apologetic air implying that this is something for consideration in the sweet bye-and-bye, and that more important matters require attention. This is a fatal mistake . . . Labour through all its ramifications should take up once more the slogan of 'Socialism in our time.'"

The Committee published also a list of over 100 "Socialisation Units" already formed and particulars of many more in process of formation. In order that readers may clearly understand, it is necessary to state exactly what a Socialisation Unit was. Units were formed in connection with any branch of the party and consisted of those favouring the policy of the Socialisation Committee. They held separate meetings, elected their own officers, held their own funds, organised propaganda meetings, lectures, etc., and generally were, practically speaking, free from the control of the Executive, but responsible to the "Socialisation Committee."

### Boring from Within.

It will easily be realised by students of the Labour movement that, in face of such a development within the ranks of the "Social Fascists," the Communists could not remain idle or indifferent. Having tried, without success, for many years to obtain entrance to the A.L.P. as an affiliated body, they have, during recent years, attempted, likewise without success, to influence Labour policy through united front contacts inside the movement itself.

The October, 1931, issue of the *Socialisation Call*, published on its front page two reports on policy; one afterwards commonly known as the Payne report, the other the Central Socialisation Committee's Official Declaration of Policy. The Payne report resulted from the inspired appointment by a meeting of unit delegates of a sub-committee of three, which was instructed to lay down a principle and policy under five heads: (1) Socialisation; (2) Legislative Council; (3) Free Speech; (4) Food Relief, and (5) Soviet Union.

This report, though carefully written, bore in every paragraph the marks of its Sussex Street (Communist Hall) origin. In rejecting this report and putting forward their own unanimous Declaration, the Committee said:—

"The Committee rejects the report, not because of sentiments of flabby pacifism, but because it believes that the same amount of heroic energy and life that would be expended in the logical and extremely doubtful outcome of such a policy to-day, would, if as self-sacrificingly devoted to the less spectacular and dramatic, but more enduring tasks of solid socialisation propaganda and organisation, bring us to within measurable reach of our objective with far more certainty of ultimate success."

The declaration further issued a warning to the then rising New Guard Fascist Movement, and called upon all sections of the movement to assist in achieving its object, "the next great stage of Humanity's Progress through the Age—The Worldwide Fraternity of Socialist Peoples."

Early in 1932 the Committee and its supporters started a Central Labour College, with classes in Economics, Industrial History, etc., which subsequently spread, with varying success, throughout the suburbs and country districts. In its issue of February, 1932, the *Socialisation Call* published an article by a well-known Victorian Labour journalist, "Scrutator," which began as follows:—

"I have been invited by the Editor to say a few words on Labour and Education. A few words! I wish I could crystallise all there is to say on this vital, super-important subject into eight or eighty clauses and induce the organisations to accept them, with the Socialist objective, as the whole Labour platform."

The next issue, March-April, 1932, was a special Easter Conference issue, and contained an article by Mr. J. C. Eldridge, former M.H.R. (member of Federal Parliament), which said:—

"The Australian Labour Party is called upon to justify its existence in the terms of its declared objective or declare itself a bogus institution, and, by proving unequal to the demands now being made upon it, enter upon its decline and ultimate dissolution."

During all this time the official Labour Party, as represented by its executive and the bulk of its



membership, had been continuing its work as an organisation concerned about reforming capitalism.

In November, 1930, J. T. Lang and fifty-four other representatives of the A.L.P. had been returned to power in the State Parliament of New South Wales. This constituted the largest majority ever held by a Labour Government and replaced the Bavin (Nationalist) régime. The Labour Government then proceeded to carry on capitalism, to reconcile its promises of employment to the workers with the necessities of its position as a party primarily representing Australian capitalism. On May 13th, 1932, Mr. Lang went out of office, dismissed by the Governor on a technical point.

The Nationalist Party formed an interim Cabinet under the premiership of B. S. B. Stevens, former Treasurer in the Bavin Government. The elections for a new Parliament were held on June 11th, 1932.

During the campaign which preceded this election, despite the Conference resolutions referred to above, not one official mention of Socialism or "Socialisation" was made, either in the policy speech of J. T. Lang, in the election propaganda issued by the central campaign committee or in the proposals of individual candidates. The election was fought on a purely reform policy, despite the propaganda of the socialisation section of the movement.

The result of the elections was a decisive defeat for the Labour Party, and a storm of controversy broke out therein, the majority blaming the "Socialisers" for the defeat and *vice versa*. In the May issue of the *Socialisation Call*, prior to the events just recorded and immediately after the last Conference, the Socialisation Committee had published a scheme for the co-ordination of the existing units by delegates to Electorate Committees, thence to District Group Councils, who were to send delegates to an aggregate delegate meeting held regularly in conjunction with the Central Socialisation Committee. Later it commenced a drive for the formation of Job and Union Units, and formed an Industrial Socialisation Committee to co-ordinate their activities.

So far this is the Labour Party "Socialisers' " dream; but what followed is the inevitable fate of all such attempts once they challenge the real basis of the Party and the interests of its leaders.

These further developments will be dealt with in a second article.

○ F. F. W.  
(Socialist Party of Australia).

#### This Month's Quotation.

The quotation on the front page this month is from "Labour's Wrongs and Labour's Remedy," by J. F. Bray. 1839. Page 37.

## Marx's Letters to Kugelmann

*Letters to Kugelmann . . . by Karl Marx.* 148 pp., 3s. 6d. Cloth; 2s. Paper. Martin Lawrence, Ltd., 33, Gt. James Street, London, W.C.1.

A valuable contribution to Marxian literature is the issue in the English language of the letters written by Marx to Dr. Kugelmann during the years 1862-1874. Many of the letters have appeared in various English periodicals, but this is the first issue of the letters in the complete form. With just a slight initial resentment, due to certain defects mentioned below, the book gives a final sense of gratitude and satisfaction. In the past these letters have suffered from interference by Karl Kautsky, who, when he published them in the *Neue Zeit*, deliberately omitted passages to suit his political purpose, and suppressed one letter altogether. This letter, written by Marx on February 23rd, 1865, exposed the political trickery of Ferdinand Lassalle. Though the Directors of the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow realise the importance of this letter, no reference is made by them to the discovery of evidence that finally proved the rascality of Lassalle, and justified Engels in his detestation of that schemer.

Reference should have been made in the Foreword to the finding of material showing that Lassalle had been in secret communication with Bismarck. If one may digress, may it be pointed out that Engels always held the view that Lassalle was a humbug. On June 11th, 1863, he wrote Marx that Lassalle was in the service of Bismarck. ("Der Kerl arbeitet jetzt rein im Dienst von Bismarck." Page 144, Vol. 3, Marx-Engels Correspondence.) But to come nearer to the date of this suppressed letter, Engels, on January 27th, 1865, told Marx (letter 890, Page 219, Vol. 3, as above) that Lassalle was gradually being exposed as a common rogue. This matter of exposure had been in Marx's mind for quite a while, and the letter to Kugelmann was the result. Kautsky suppressed it, and Lenin, when he wrote the preface to the Russian translation of these letters, was unaware of its existence. Absence of comment is curious, because in the issue of selected letters of Marx and Engels, issued in Germany under the imprimatur of the Marx-Engels Institute, details are given of the discovery of the communications. (These letters are in course of translation into English, and will be published shortly by Martin Lawrence, Ltd.)

It is perhaps unfortunate that the type was set up and printed in Moscow. The translation, apparently, originated there, for the letters are now in the archives of the Marx-Engels Institute. Better service would have been rendered to the English-reading public had the entire arrangements for publication been left to competent

English experts. The advantage accruing to the possession of the complete series is minimised by an insufficient regard for Marx's original text. The effort to impress the reader by the needless intrusion of italics and inverted commas, is an illusion. Marx knew what he wanted to say, *how* to say it, and how to express himself with simplicity. He now and again wandered off into Italian, French and English phrases. Those which were in English are not indicated, while the other "foreign" phrases are given in the original in the text and translated in footnotes. Some of the English sentences—or phrases—are neither indicated nor printed accurately. But unless such indication is given, the literary value and sting may be lost, and Marx's meaning and sense of expression nullified.

Also, the use of italics in the letters as printed is mystifying. There seems to be no regular method adopted. For example, on page 31, in the letter which Kautsky suppressed, the translator has this:—

So they want to take the circumstances as they are, and not irritate the government, just like our "republican" "real politicians," who are not willing to "put up with" a Hohenzollern emperor.

But in the German original Marx had only one word in quotation marks (the German equivalent of "republican,") and only one word spaced out for emphasis (the German equivalent of emperor). Why then these further modifications?

In another passage on the same page the translator gives as his version:—

We are making a stir here now on the General Suffrage Question, which, of course, has a significance here quite different from what it has in Prussia.

In the original Marx used no emphasis on these words, and there can be no justification for departing from what he wrote.

With regard to the failure to indicate passages which Marx originally gave in English, Marx knew his method of expression, and when he substituted a phrase in another language, it was because to him, it acquired the precise weight of expression. Therefore, it should be necessary—at least to us who read English, to know which passages Marx wrote in English, in order to gather the impressions of the moment.

In the last paragraph on page 31 the following words were originally written by Marx in English: "Member of the Association," "individual membership," "societies," "an English card of membership" (the translator transposes this into "an English membership card"). At the top of page 32 the translator gives Marx's words correctly—"the English society is public," but puts "public" in italics.

This may appear to be captious criticism, but it is a plea for accuracy, and in some cases, the

modified version gives an appreciably different meaning.

Notwithstanding this we can heartily recommend the book. It contains 148 pages, printed in clean, clear type, on a very fine paper, in red cloth, with lettering in gold. All foreign phrases are translated, and there is an excellent and informative biographical index which is itself a mine of information. Students of Dietzgen will find an interesting letter he wrote to Marx, and there is a preface by Lenin in which he attacks Plechanoff for his attitude during the Moscow uprising of 1905.

MOSES BARITZ.

#### Lewisham.

Will members and sympathisers living in or near Lewisham, who are willing to co-operate in the formation of a local branch, please communicate with the Organiser, at 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1?

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Sheffield.

A meeting will take place in Room 10, Friend's School, Hartshead, Monday, 8th October, at 7.30 p.m. "The S.P.G.B.'s attitude to Fascism."

Speaker - - G. H. Southgate

All welcome. Questions and discussion. Admission free.

### DEBATE

#### The Labour Party versus The S.P.G.B.

A debate will take place on

Friday, October 19th, at 8 p.m.

at Working Men's Club, Clerkenwell Road  
(near Holborn Hall, Grays Inn Road)

Subject - "Which Party is Working for Socialism:  
The Labour Party or the S.P.G.B.?"

For the Labour Party: Mr. G. H. Loman, prospective Labour candidate, Kingston-on-Thames. For the S.P.G.B.: Robertus.  
Admission free, all invited. Commence 8 p.m.

## DANCE and SOCIAL

on Saturday, October 13th, 7.30 to 11 p.m.

at the

Express Dairy, Charing Cross Road  
(opposite the Alhambra).

Tickets 1/3 each

\* \* \* \* \*

#### A New Pamphlet

## The Socialist Party: its Principles and Policy

IS NOW ON SALE

Price 2d. (post free 2½d.)

Send your orders to the Literature Secretary, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1



## Press Cuttings

### Russia Lends a Hand—To Prop Up Capitalism

From a speech by Dr. Benes (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Czecho-Slovakia) at the Assembly of the League of Nations:—

"It is impossible to deny that the world is passing through a very grave crisis.

"It is a crisis of ideas of morals and of religious beliefs," he added, "a crisis in world economic affairs, in internal politics, in social conditions and systems, a far-reaching crisis in international relationships, involving threats of war and revolution of every kind."

Speaking of Russia's application for membership, Dr. Benes said this was a country without whose co-operation conditions in Europe and in the world as a whole could never quite return to normal. (*Daily Herald*, September 11th, 1934.)

### Our All-Knowing Masters

Mr. Lloyd George has some illuminating passages on the way in which official personages regard the mass of the population on whose shoulders they have been raised to eminence. The following refers to Lord Milner and Henry Wilson, both of whom were sent to Russia to report on conditions there during the War:—

The head of the British Delegation, Lord Milner, was by training and temperament a bureaucrat. He knew nothing of the populace that trod the streets outside the bureau. He did not despise them. He just left them out of his calculations. A study of the ways and thoughts of the crowd constituted no part of the preparation for entry into the Civil Service or for success afterwards. The more you meddled with that side of government, the less chance there was for promotion. It was for the politicians to deal with these things, and he was not and never became a politician. Henry Wilson was every inch of him—and he had many more inches than the average—a professional soldier. The soldiers were not supposed to take cognisance of the people, except the specimens who joined the army. He judged these entirely by the canons of discipline. The supreme test of discipline was saluting the officers. He saw with his own eyes that the Russian soldiers passed that test superbly. Mutiny in the army was therefore remote, and if the army could be depended upon, the "frocks" (as he always nicknamed politicians) who babbled in the Duma did not matter. He had strong political prejudices, but they were sectarian in their origin, and all irrelevant to the Russian situation. He hated Papists and Irish patriots, and he encountered neither among the Russian soldiers or civilians. So he quite independently and from another angle supported Milner in the conclusion that there was no danger of any upheaval in the immediate future. The chief missionaries therefore were unanimously of opinion that although revolution was inevitable it would be postponed till after the war.

### The Drift Away from Nationalisation

It used to be an article of faith with the Labour Party that State enterprise or Nationalisation was a step towards Socialism. They ignored the numerous instances of State enterprise being

a stepping-stone towards a less restricted form of capitalism. Japan was an example of the latter, as is also the Indian State of Mysore. There are signs that Russia is moving in the same direction. The following is from the *Times*, and relates to Mysore:—

#### FUTURE OF STATE INDUSTRIES.

The President of the Mysore Chamber of Commerce considers that the time has come for Bangalore to have a stock exchange of its own, instead of transactions in the many Government and joint stock securities of the State being "largely controlled by the organised markets of Bombay and Madras." . . . While commending the forward policy which has made Mysore a great industrial State, the President believes that the position under which the Government started and own and manage many industrial concerns should now be reviewed. He is of opinion that some at least of these State-pioneered industrial and trade concerns should be handed over to private enterprise, so that they may be further developed in the larger interests of the country. He expressed his satisfaction . . . that the policy of combining private enterprise with Government ownership and management has been happily inaugurated at the new great Mysore sugar factory. (*Times*, September 14th.)

### A Minimum Wage—What Then?

Writing about the Report for 1932 and 1933 just issued by the Ministry of Agriculture, the *Daily Herald* says that thousands of farmers—

are breaking the law by paying their men less than the minimum rates of wages laid down by the County Agricultural Wages Committees. (*Daily Herald*, September 21st.)

This has been going on for years. Some observers estimate that probably twenty-five per cent. of the land-workers are paid less than the legal minimum rates.

The *Daily Herald*, and others who devote their time to securing legal enactments by which to prune, trim, restrict, regularise, improve, standardise, normalise, and otherwise tinker with the capitalist system, should take particular note of the position in agriculture, where legally fixed rates are supposed to be operative.

### Home—1934

The Conservative Party headquarters, in their monthly journal, *The Elector* (September, 1934), triumphantly quote an unemployed worker in defence of the Government's residential training centres for the unemployed. The Conservatives are, of course, anxious to discredit the Labour Party's attacks on these centres, but they were so eager that they fail to realise the full significance of the following passage:—

There's no punishment—but a fellow can be sent home. That's the worst thing that can happen to him. After generations of Liberal, Labour and Conservative reforms designed to abolish slums, provide homes for heroes, eliminate poverty and unemployment, and generally to make capitalism fit to live under, it is a punishment in the eyes of an unemployed man to be sent "home"!

### Hitler and Stalin.

Communists who so violently abuse British rule in India, or abuse the Nazi dictatorship for the brutal murders of June 30th, would do well to ask themselves whether the methods of the German secret police system are any worse than the methods of the Russian OGPU. The *News Bulletin* of the Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee, a body which exists to defend and apologise for the Soviet Government in the English Press, contains the following statement concerning the OGPU's powers:—

... the OGPU did have very wide powers in dealing with acts of counter-revolution and sabotage. They had power to arrest, try and sentence to exile, imprisonment, or even death, individuals suspected of these crimes without recourse to the ordinary courts of law.

If the officials of the Russian OGPU were as hysterical and unbalanced as some of the leading Communists in this country, anybody on whom they happened to cast an eye might be suspected of anything, and their chance of disproving the suspicions would be about as good as those of the men and women shot without warning by Hitler's thugs.

### "Original" Measures against Unemployment.

The Fascist movements still go on claiming that they have made a new and original contribution to political and economic thought. The following comes from Italy:—

Original measures to alleviate unemployment have been suggested to Signor Mussolini by the National Confederation of Fascist Industrial Syndicates, which is a department of the new corporative state.

They include the  
Institution of two or more shifts during a working day,  
Reduction of working hours,  
Abolition of overtime,  
An increase in the number of operatives to a machine,  
A wider distribution of all available piece-work, and  
Restrictions in the employment of women and juveniles. (*Daily Telegraph*, August 1st.)

"Original" measures! Their age is only exceeded by the degree of their uselessness.

### Mr. Garvin.

Of all well-informed publicists, Mr. J. L. Garvin is about the most abysmally and persistently ignorant regarding Socialism. This is from the *Observer* (September 2nd):—

#### SIGNOR MUSSOLINI AND SOCIALISM.

Labels in modern politics often mislead simple folk. Exaggerated interest has, therefore, been aroused by the report from Italy that Signor Mussolini has approached his former Socialist comrades to take executive office with him. Is that so surprising? The corporative state is socialism in the simple meaning of the word.

Mr. Garvin's last sentence is bosh, both in the simple and in all other meanings of the word.

### Who Owns London?

From an article by A. P. Luscombe Whyte in the *Evening Standard* (May 30th, 1934):—

Lord Howard de Walden has also been dubbed "London's richest landlord, with an income of £400,000 a year" (paying for his horse Blazonry's feed). Up till 1925 he owned 40 acres of the heart of London, stretching from Oxford Street to Euston Road, and from Oxford Circus and Regent Street eastward to Wells Street. He sold at a good time to a trust largely owned by Sir John Ellerman at a price said to be £3,000,000. A few years before, the public had gaped at reports of his sale of a large slice of the West of London for £4,000,000. A handful of other landlords own, or have owned, considerable sections of London. Among them are Dulwich College, with two square miles, and Lord St. Germans and Sir Spencer Maryon-Wilson, to whom is attributed nearly as much.

To-day the old estates are dwindling. They are passing, acre by acre, into the hands of great trusts and companies, whose rule is often more strict and less human than that of the former manorial owners. It is only the poor individual Londoner, who lives there, who has nothing to say about his city. It isn't his.

### Gandhi's Utopianism.

From a speech delivered by Gandhi at Amedabad on June 20th, 1934:—

"The duel between capitalists and labour is only between big words to me. . . . Both are capitalists: one has consolidated his capital and utilised it intelligently; the other squanders it recklessly. If you communists or anybody wish the destruction of capitalists we would be destroyed.

"What I really do want is a combination, mixing and unity of the two. What I want from both is useful use of wealth. When we all learn the use of wealth in a better way and teach the same to capitalists, then alone we would be able to do some useful work for India's labourers and bring them to higher standards. This I say and propound from my fifty years' mature experience." Replying to other questions, Gandhi said that he was at present under a vow not to discuss politics or to criticise Government's policy and, therefore, he could not criticise the Government for firing on Bombay strikers, etc., without violating the vow he had taken. That vow was taken in the presence of God and, therefore, he considered it inviolable and sacrosanct. (*Indian Labour Journal*, July 8th.) H.

### "The Western Socialist"

Published by the Socialist Party of Canada is obtainable from the Socialist Party of Canada, Manitoba Hotel, 194, Market Avenue East, Winnipeg, at five cents a copy; or at 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, at 2d. per copy (2½d. post free).

### "The Socialist Review."

Published by the Socialist Party of New Zealand is obtainable from T. J. Phillips, 16, Hawea Road, Point Chevalier, Auckland, W.3., or at 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1. Price 1d. per copy (1½d. post free).

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## Open Air Meetings

## OCTOBER

## Saturdays

Jolly Butcher's Hill, Wood Green ... 8 p.m. Rushcroft Road, Brixton, Opp. Lambeth  
West Green Corner, Tottenham ... 8 p.m. Town Hall ... 7.30 p.m.

## Sundays

Clapham Common ... 7 p.m. Whipps Cross Corner ... 8 p.m.  
Finsbury Park ... 5.30 p.m. Kenninghall Road (Lea Bridge Road end) ... 8 p.m.  
Victoria Park ... 6 p.m. Southend, Sea Front ... 7.30 p.m.  
Brockwell Park ... 6 p.m. King's Hall Picture House, Bakers Arms,  
Cock Hotel, East Ham ... 7.30 p.m. Leyton ... 12 a.m.  
Liverpool Street, Walworth, Camberwell Gate 11.30 a.m.

**Mondays:** ... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8 ... 8 p.m.  
Highbury Corner, N. ... 8 p.m.  
"Heaton Arms," Rye Lane, Peckham, S.E. ... 8 p.m.  
**Tuesdays:** ... Clissold Corner, Albion Road, N.16 ... 8 p.m.  
**Wednesdays:** ... West Green Corner, Tottenham, N. ... 8 p.m.  
Windsor Road, Forest Gate, E. ... 8 p.m.  
"Prince of Wales," Harrow Road, W. ... 8 p.m.  
Clock Tower, Avenue Road, Lewisham, S.E. ... 8 p.m.  
**Thursdays:** ... Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8. ... 8 p.m.  
"Salmon and Ball," Bethnal Green, E. ... 8 p.m.  
**Fridays:** ... Ilford Station, E. ... 8 p.m.  
"Chequers," Ripple Road, Dagenham ... 8 p.m.

## BRANCH DIRECTORY

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.  
**BIRKENHEAD.**—Communications to H. Dawson, 26, Vulcan Street, Birkenhead, Cheshire.  
**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.  
**BLOOMSBURY.**—Branch meets every Monday at 7.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road.) Miss B. Foster, Sec., S.P.G.B., at above address.  
**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.  
**CHISWICK.**—(See West London).  
**DAGENHAM.**—Branch meets alternate Mondays (from August 6th) at 8 p.m., Pettits' Farm, Heathway. Sec. J. Oliver, 87, Rogers Road, Dagenham, Essex.  
**ECCLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. LEA, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Lancs.  
**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place.  
**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month, 8 p.m., at 98 Naburn Street, Glasgow, C.5. Communications to M. Falconer at above address.  
**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Friday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., D. Goldberg, 21, Bridge Street, E.9.  
**HULL.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at York Room, The Metropole. Communications to Sec., at 62, Ampleforth Grove, Willerby Road.  
**ILFORD.**—Branch meets Mondays at 8 p.m. at 142, Richmond Road. Discussion after branch business. Communications to Sec., H. S. Greenwood, at above address.  
**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to F. W., 90, Wellington Road, Holloway, N.2. Branch meets on Fridays at 8 to 10.30 p.m., at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.  
**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., Mrs. E. C. Snell, 17, Theobald Road, E.17. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**MANCHESTER.**—Branch meets fortnightly (Mondays) as from 28 May, at Craigwell Restaurant, Peter Street (entrance in South Street). Sec., B. A. Lee, 19, Emery Avenue, Chorlton, Manchester.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets 8 p.m., 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, at 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Discussion at 9.30 p.m. Literature Sec., W. M. Veal, 78, Wornington Road, W.10.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., E. Boden, 96, Edgedale Road, Sheffield, 7. Branch meets alternate Mondays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 10, Friend's School, Hartahead.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in the month, at 8 p.m. at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec. at above address.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover St., S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Sec., S. Goldstein, 18, Irene House, Flower & Dene Street, Stepney, E.1. Branch meets on Fridays, at 8 p.m., at Working Lads Institute (nr. Whitechapel Station).

**TOOTING.**—Communications to W. Mehew, 19, Littleton Street, S.W.18.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to A. Cash, Junr., 51 Morrison Avenue, N.17.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Branch meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. at the Workman's Hall (Room 2). High Street, E.17. Sec., Clifford Beloe, 158, Northcote Road, Walthamstow, E.17. Lecture and discussion on alternate Wednesdays.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall School, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WEST LONDON (Chiswick).**—Branch meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Chiswick Club, over 376, High Road, Chiswick, W.4. Communications to Sec., C. Curtis, 52, Parkstead Road, Putney, S.W.15.

**WEMBLEY.**—Communications to H. G. Holt, 28, Charterhouse Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex. Branch meets every Friday at 7.45 p.m. at Cafe-Restaurant over 170, High Road, Wembley.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.



# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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London, November, 1934

[Monthly. Twopence

*Wage-Slavery  
is a passing  
phase of social  
development,  
but it will pass  
only when the  
workers are  
ready to speed  
it away.*

## A Vain Sacrifice

In February last the Austrian Social Democrats, faced with the destruction of their organisations and with the loss of their control of Vienna and other municipalities, tried to resist by armed force and a general strike the onslaught of the forces directed by the Government. In a brief but ferocious period of civil war, and in spite of their heroic resistance they were crushed. In addition to the loss of life in the fighting itself, they are now paying the penalty of defeat in prison, concentration camp and exile.

In the SOCIALIST STANDARD for March we paid our tribute to the Austrian workers for their courage and tenacity, while pointing out that they were fighting an unnecessary battle. In that and the

following issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD attention was drawn to the fact that various groups of workers in Spain were marching on the same road to a similar destruction. Early in October the Spanish revolt began. Within a few days it was apparent to those who led the workers into it that the attempt had failed, although towards the end of

the month some isolated bands were still holding out, without any hope but that of selling their lives dearly. The bravery of the Spanish workers has availed them nothing.

Blind to what happened in Vienna and has happened almost invariably when this method has been tried, Spanish workers' organisations attempted to overthrow the Spanish Government by armed revolt and a general strike. The failure was as pitiful as in Austria, although the cost in human life is likely to be far greater. The rigid Press censorship makes it impossible so far to give full figures, but reports from Orviedo indicate that in that province alone—the centre of the coal and iron industries—upwards of 3,000 people have been killed. (See *Sunday Express*, October 21st.) Some estimates place the figure as high as 10,000. Large numbers of rebels have been shot after capture, and other executions are threatened. The general strike was broken and the armed workers were everywhere smashed by the overwhelming might of the State forces. All the most modern and destructive weapons were used by the Government, including artillery, tanks, gas, and bombing planes. As was inevitable, the number and power of the arms of the rebel forces were small in comparison with those of the Government.

The occasion of the revolt was the inclusion of three Catholics in a reconstructed Cabinet. Representing reactionary political groups, they were widely believed, like similar groups in Austria, to be heading for the restoration of the exiled monarchy, the creation of a Fascist State, the destruction of the Trade Unions, etc. Rather than wait for this, the Spanish Socialist Party (a reformist body, similar to the typical Labour Party)

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joined hands with Syndicalists and Communists to defend the Republic. Parallel with this working-class movement was a strong regionalist opposition to the centralising policy of the Madrid Government. Some of the provinces, particularly the industrial and commercial province of Catalonia, strongly objected to the Central Government's policy, which aimed at depriving them of the measure of regional autonomy they had achieved under the Republic.

From a working class and Socialist standpoint the revolt was a piece of criminal irresponsibility. The overwhelming majority of Spanish electors are not Socialist, and do not understand or desire Socialism. What is more, they have shown with increasing force at each election since the overthrow of Alfonso that they do not want Labourites, Syndicalists or Communists. Allowing for every possibility of faked election figures, the votes given to these groups represent only a small minority of the votes given to openly capitalist parties, republican and royalist. For the leaders of these minority groups to try to seize power in such circumstances is sheer folly, irresponsible gambling with workers' lives. If, as is usual, such an attempt fails, there follows a period—possibly extending to many years—of savage repression. In the unlikely event of success in seizing control of the machinery of Government the outcome in the long run is even more disastrous for the working class and for the Socialist movement. No minority, whether in Spain, Russia, Austria or anywhere else, can impose Socialism on a hostile or apathetic majority. Forced, therefore, to abandon the idea of introducing Socialism, the new rulers sooner or later accommodate themselves to the job of administering capitalism. Finding power sweet they develop the century-old technique of intrigue, deception, bribery, and arbitrary violence in order to keep themselves in power. Unable to give the reality of Socialism they learn a new propaganda, which consists, crudely put, of calling the unregenerate capitalism by a new name—Socialism.

Knowing this the Socialist Party of Great Britain refuses in any circumstances to countenance the policy of minority armed revolt. That road does not lead to Socialism. In truth it leads nowhere, for workers who head that way must sooner or later retrace their steps if they are to play their part in achieving Socialism.

H.

## LEYTON.

**Social and Dance**

will be held at

The Co-operative Hall, Lea Bridge Road  
(Near Savoy Cinema, Leyton),

on Saturday, November 10th, at 7.30 p.m.

Tickets 1/-

Pagoda Dance Band. In Branch activities.

**Woe to the Victors**

The Labour Party Conference this year was held in an atmosphere of expectancy and confidence of triumphs to come. Rightly or wrongly, the delegates felt that the rule of the National Government, coming to a close, is not to be renewed, and that the defeats and desertions of 1931 will be forgotten in a sweeping electoral victory not far ahead. Then, with a majority to back up its decisions, a Labour Government will inaugurate a new era in British politics. That is the belief, but Socialists do not share it. Electoral victory maybe—though improbable without a Labour-Liberal alliance of some sort or other—but that victory will be more than perilous; it may well be one of the most disastrous episodes in working-class history, comparable with the post-war "victories" of the Social-Democrats in Germany and Austria, with all their aftermath of violence, despair and savage reaction. Such victory will be not a development towards Socialism, but yet another check to the growth of the Socialist movement. These are hard words. Let us justify them in the light of what was by far the most instructive of the resolutions of the Conference. It was a resolution which the Labour Party's official organ, the *Daily Herald*, regarded as of such importance as to merit being featured on the front page. It was carried "by the largest majority that has been polled at the present Conference" (*Daily Herald*, October 5th). What was this question which divided the votes into a stupendous majority of 2,118,000 on the one side and the tiny minority of 149,000 on the other? Surprising as it may appear to those who regard the Labour Party as a party of Socialists, this huge majority came together in order to demonstrate the Labour Party's abhorrence of anything smacking of Socialism. It was, to be explicit, a recommendation of the Executive Committee in favour of "fair compensation" for owners and shareholders whose property is nationalised by a Labour Government, the compensation to be based roughly on the present valuation of the property. The proposal which the majority rejected was one put forward by the Socialist League which would have meant depriving the owners of one-half to two-thirds of their property.

Let us, first of all, make it perfectly clear that the Socialist League's proposal is not Socialism, and that the League, in our view, is almost as muddled in its views as the I.L.P., from which it sprang, and as the Labour Party, to which it is uneasily affiliated. Socialism does not mean State industries run on capitalist lines, either with or without compensation of the existing owners. Socialism means a system of society in which the means of production are owned by society as a whole, a system in which goods will really be produced for use, not for sale and profit-making, and in which there will be no such thing as an income from the ownership of pro-

perty, whether as land, buildings, plant, shares or Government bonds. These things are plain enough to Socialists, but at present utterly beyond the comprehension of the great majority of members of the Socialist League and Labour Party.

It follows that Socialists are not at all interested in the issue which divides the Socialist League and the Labour Party, as to whether or not the owners should receive full or only part compensation. There can be no such thing as compensation if Socialism is to replace Capitalism. What the owners now possess is the right to an income from property, the right to live without working, the right to exploit the labour of the working-class. There can be no Socialism unless and until the means of production and distribution are taken from them and made over to society for the use of all. The former owners will then enjoy the fruits of associated labour on an equal footing with all other members of society, neither privileged nor suppressed, but as equals. But there can be no compensation. You cannot abolish exploitation and at the same time give the exploiters something equivalent to their former right of exploitation. A slave-owner, deprived of his slaves, could be given property rights of another kind under capitalism. But abolish capitalist wage-slavery and you end exploitation for all time and for all persons.

These elementary truths of Socialism are, of course, unknown to the delegates at Labour Party Conferences, but in their groping, muddle-headed way the Socialist League members feel that there must be some catch in the Labour Party's bland assurance that there is going to be more of the cake for the workers without decreasing the share of the capitalists—hence their attempt at revolt, which was crushed with such devastating completeness.

It means that the Labour Party has reiterated its belief in "compensation," that is, in capitalism. It will take office if opportunity arises, determined to apply its numerous and complicated schemes for reorganising industry, raising wages, abolishing unemployment, etc., while retaining all the essentials of capitalism. It will retain rent, interest and profit, the wages system, buying and selling, and the struggle for foreign markets, and will leave the capitalist class still possessed of their property rights, their right to exploit the working class.

The result will be another tragic collapse, tragic because many workers will believe it to be a collapse of Socialism, or proof that political methods are useless. Every individual who lends a hand in the establishment of the Labour Party in power is contributing to that collapse, and is helping to ensure a further lease of life for capitalism, with the likelihood that the subsequent Government may be one of iron-handed, panic-stricken repression.

Before concluding, we may usefully devote a little space to the arguments of those who opposed

the Socialist League. Mr. Herbert Morrison, an astute Labour politician, put the case cogently from a Labour Party standpoint when he said that to adopt the Socialist League amendment would frighten the electors, and "You would keep yourself out of political power" (*Daily Herald*, October 5th). Mr. Morrison here, as elsewhere, shows himself a clever exponent of half-truths. He will say, as we do, that there can be no Socialism without political power, and no political power without the support of the electors. He knows, too (but is very careful not to proclaim it at times and in places where it may prove embarrassing to the electoral prospects of the Labour Party, that there is no solution to the poverty problem other than Socialism, that all the highfalutin schemes of his Party will leave the problem unsolved. That is where the Morrisons—those who are interested in political careers—necessarily part company from the Socialist. We face up to the logic of the situation. Mr. Morrison and his Party dare not do so. They dare not proclaim from the public platform that there can be no Socialism without an organised majority of Socialists, with its logical corollary that any acquirement of political power before that organised Socialist majority exists is a snare and delusion to the working class. Mr. Morrison knows, and admits, that a Government cannot go beyond the mandate and understanding of the electorate. He knows that a Labour Government cannot introduce Socialism, which the electorate and the bulk of its own members neither want nor understand. He knows that the reform measures the electorate will permit and endorse are not Socialism, and will not solve the problems facing the working class, who form the overwhelming majority of the electorate. He knows, therefore, that a Labour Government cannot do the one thing which alone can solve the problems it is promising to solve. Only Mr. Morrison and his colleagues can say why they play this double game. Is it vaulting ambition, reckless of consequences? Is it the insane over-confidence of the "leader," persuading himself against his own knowledge and experience, that his god-like gifts will enable him to lead the "mob" to impossible victory? Is it, after all, merely that underneath the surface-smartness of the successful Labour politician there is a profound stupidity and ignorance about the realities of capitalism and Socialism?

Whatever the answer, the penalty for the working class is appalling to contemplate. Let the leaders and followers alike stop and consider the spectacle of savage Hitlerite capitalism before launching out blindly on the path which led the German Social-Democrats to destruction, and may lead to a similar end in this country.

H.

**HOW TO GET TO HEAD OFFICE.**

Great Dover Street is a turning out of Borough High Street, near Borough (Underground) Station. The station is on the line from Morden to Hampstead and Highgate, and lies between the Bank Station and Elephant and Castle.



## Marx and the Political Machinery

A correspondent writes querying our interpretation of the view held by Marx about obtaining control of the political machinery.

To the Editorial Committee,

SOCIALIST STANDARD,

42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1.

Dear Sirs,

In the Socialist Library, No. 11, "The S.P.G.B. and Questions of the Day," on page 52, occurs:—

"The significance . . . is the one Marx so constantly stressed, viz., the need to gain control of the political machinery."

Query: In what work or works of Marx does he stress anything of the sort? Is there even one instance? Let alone "constant" stressing!

Yours, etc.,

JOHN HAWKINS.

Reply.

Readers who are not familiar with the issue raised by this letter may find some explanation useful.

The S.P.G.B. holds that in order to achieve Socialism the Socialist majority will have to gain control of the political machinery. Our Declaration of Principles covers this point in the clause which follows:—

"That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic."

We know that this is the road to Socialism, and the only road to Socialism, because our every-day experience of the workings of capitalism shows us this beyond the possibility of doubt. Given the other requisite for the building up of Socialism, a majority of Socialists politically organised, conquest of the powers of Government will be the deciding factor. Without it the working class will still be unable to impose the form of social organisation they desire. Every movement which has ignored this truth, and has acted on the assumption, whether explicit or implied, that the State power can be disregarded, has come to disaster. This is true, whether the movement had Socialism as its objective or any other.

In the pamphlet to which our correspondent refers we were illustrating the truth of our case from the experience of the Bolsheviks in Russia. We show ("The S.P.G.B. and Questions of the Day," Chapter XI) that the Bolsheviks were helpless until they came into control of the political machinery of the Russian State. Until they did that they were

not able to carry out the wishes of the discontented non-Socialist masses of workers and peasants who stood behind them.

It must be emphasised that the S.P.G.B. bases its case on the facts of the situation in which we find ourselves. That is the final test of this and every other part of the Socialist case. We are vastly indebted to Marx and Engels for their work in helping us to a proper appreciation of the facts, but it is not our contention in this or any other question that a certain view is the correct one simply because Marx or Engels, or anyone else, held that view. Nevertheless, we do claim that this clause of our Declaration of Principles is in line with the general views of Marx and Engels as to the need to gain control of the political machinery, and we consider that the fact that they did hold this view entitles it to very serious consideration, quite apart from the lessons of experience gained since they died.

The following passages from the writings of Marx and Engels show clearly that this was their view.

Marx and Engels—1847.

"We have seen above, that the first step in the revolution by the working class, is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy."—(Marx and Engels, "Communist Manifesto," 1847, Whitehead Library Edition, p. 39.)

Engels—1850.

"The working classes will have learned by experience that no lasting benefit whatever can be obtained for them by others, but that they must obtain it themselves by conquering, first of all, political power. They must see now that under no circumstances have they any guarantee for bettering their social position unless by Universal Suffrage, which would enable them to send a Majority of Working Men in the House of Commons."

"The Ten Hours Question," by F. Engels (page 376, *The Democratic Review*, March, 1850).

Marx—1852.

"But universal suffrage is the equivalent for political power for the working class of England, where the proletariat form the large majority of the population, where, in a long, though underground, civil war, it has gained a clear consciousness of its position as a class, and where even the rural districts know no longer any peasants, but landlords, industrial capitalists (farmers) and hired labourers. The carrying of universal suffrage in England would, therefore, be a far more Socialistic measure than anything which has been honoured with that name on the Continent."

"Its inevitable result here, is the political supremacy of the working class."

("From an article on the Chartists, by Marx, *New York Tribune*, August 25th, 1852, quoted in *Labour Monthly*, August, 1929.)

Marx—1871

In the "Civil War in France" (Chapter III, p. 70, New York Labor News Co., 1920) Marx quoted with approval the following declaration of the Central Committee of the Paris workers in the Commune of 1871:—

"They have understood that it is their imperious duty and their absolute right to render themselves masters of their own destinies by seizing upon the governmental power."

## The Match that did not bring the Explosion

An incident which happened on October 8th in Marseilles brings to mind, somewhat vividly, the assassination at Sarajevo, in July, 1914, of the Archduke Ferdinand, Crown Prince of Austria. On October 8th King Alexander of Yugoslavia was assassinated whilst on an official visit (a peace mission, so it is said) to Paris.

The news of the assassination came with dramatic suddenness, and the Press, which was caught unawares, commented on the news with restraint. Later, however, the Press generally went to some trouble to assure its readers that "History was not repeating itself." Candidus, in the *Daily Sketch* on October 10th said: "The mind of everyone will instinctively go back to the murder of the Archduke at Sarajevo, which led to the Great War. But I do not apprehend any political results from this murder, except that it certainly will not encourage a more liberal policy in Croatia." He goes on to say: "The trouble of Sarajevo arose out of the fact that one nation was anxious to make an excuse for war. No nation has any such interest in this murder."

What is surprising in the above statement is that at the moment an "excuse" for war is not wanted and the implicit suggestion that if an "excuse" were necessary the convenient assassin and assassinated would appear.

There are still some workers who believe that the last war was caused by the murder of Ferdinand, Crown Prince of Austria, at Sarajevo, and who would perhaps have believed the same regarding the assassination of Alexander had another excuse for war been needed. Indeed, our masters would foster the illusion that nations become engaged in war with each other, involving death and injury to millions of workers, because of such an incident.

At present the whole Press reminds us with frequency that there is a state of tension existing between certain countries in Europe, and that at any moment some incident such as the assassination of King Alexander would result in another European war. In fact, some newspapers, such as the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express*, are almost every day urging the Government to drastically increase armaments (to preserve peace, of course!).

The answer of the Socialist to war or the threat of war, is clear and unambiguous: summed up in a phrase in our manifesto to the workers, issued in September, 1914, it is: "That there is no interest at stake justifying the shedding of one drop of working-class blood."

A. G. A.

Engels—1883.

Engels, on April 18th, 1883, one month after the death of Marx, wrote a letter to Van Patten, Secretary of the American Section of the International. It was published last winter by the Marx-Lenin Institute, and was reproduced in the *Adelphi* (London, June, 1934).

"But it has always been our view that in order to achieve this aim [the withering away of the State] and other far more important objectives of the social revolution, the working class must first take possession of the organised political power of the State, and with its aid stamp out the opposition of the capitalist class and organise society anew."

"The Anarchists turn things upside down. They declare that the proletarian revolution must begin by abolishing the political organisation of the State. But the only organisation which the proletariat, after its victory, finds ready at its disposal is just the State. This State may need considerable changes before it is fitted for its new functions. But to destroy it at that moment were to destroy the only organism by means of which the victorious proletariat could use its newly-acquired power to suppress its capitalist opponents and to carry through that economic revolution of society without which victory must end in renewed defeat and mass-slaughter of the workers, like those after the Paris Commune. Need you my expressed assurance that Marx opposed this anarchist idiosyncrasy from the first day it was hatched by Bakunin?"

(Engels to Van Patten, April 18th, 1883. "Marx-Engels' Briefe an Dritte," p. 295.)

Lenin and Tom Mann.

The above passages show what were the views of Marx and Engels. It is also interesting to notice that the teachings of these men and the lessons of experience were not wholly without effect on some of the leaders of the Communist Parties in the present day, although the two individuals referred to below were by no means consistent in their attitude.

Lenin, in his "State and Revolution" (which bears the sub-title, "Marxist Teaching on the State and the task of the Proletariat in the Revolution") wrote:—

"The proletariat needs the State, the centralised organisation of force and violence, both for the purpose of crushing the resistance of the exploiters and for the purpose of guiding the great mass of the population—the peasantry, the lower middle-class, the semi-proletariat—in the work of economic Socialist reconstruction."

(Published by the B.S.P., October, 1919, p. 30.)

Mr. Tom Mann, who used to hold strong views about the uselessness of controlling the political machinery, wrote as follows in 1922:—

"... the experience of the war and after the war has shown conclusively that we can no longer think simply of an industrial struggle, and industrial organisation is not enough. Whatever is done by industrial organisation, the organised State machine will continue to function, and will beyond question be used by the plutocracy in any and every available form against the workers. The dominant ruling class, the plutocracy, have complete control of that highly efficient machine for class purposes; the interests of the community are ever secondary to the maintenance of power by the master class, and that machine will continue to be theirs until it is wrested from them by the workers."

(*Labour Monthly*, October, 1922. Italics ours.)  
ED. COMM.

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## Poor Little—

In 1914 it was "Poor Little Belgium." Now it is "Poor Little Austria," "Poor Little Hungary," "Poor Little Ireland," according to taste. Fifty years ago it was "Poor Little Bulgaria," and fifty years before that "Poor Little Italy," and "Poor Little Greece." It is always "Poor Little" some country or other. "Poor Little X—," "Poor Little Y—," or "Poor Little A B C." Always there are sentimentalists ready to respond to this trick of personifying countries, ready to give sympathy and assistance to the weak or small nation bullied or downtrodden by the great and powerful. Yet it is all a sham. Countries are not persons, but geographical units of the all-embracing capitalist system of society. In the small, just as much as in the large, there is oppression of the weak by the strong, coercion of the poor and dispossessed by the rich and powerful who control the State, the organ of coercion. Those who help the Austrian State against the encroachments of neighbouring Powers are helping nobody but the Austrian ruling class. Those who strove to "free" Poland from the Powers which had shared its territory, and who gloried in having helped to reconstitute the Polish State were only giving the Polish workers and peasants a different set of masters. Those who fancied they were fighting for "Poor Little Belgium" were only fighting for the interests of the British and Belgian capitalists, which happened at that time to coincide.

The history of the struggles of subject nations to be free is full of the most ironical changes. The victims of one year are the bullies and assassins of the next. Poland, dismembered and annexed by Russia, Germany and Austria, has been re-created under the Versailles Treaty. Now it is the Germans, Russians, Jews and other minorities imploring help and protection against Polish tyranny. Italy, in the 19th century had all the Liberal sentimentalists shedding tears over her wrongs at the hands of the Austrian tyrants. Now Austria, the pre-war Empire itself dismembered, sorrows for her children, tyrannised by Italy in provinces annexed in 1918. For nearly 50 years, from 1871 to 1918, France mourned her lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. Now Germany mourns the same reconquered provinces. In 1905 all the Labourites in the world sympathised with "Poor Little Japan" in the war with the great imperialist Russia. Now the same sentimentalists side with "Poor Little Russia" against the big Japanese Bully. Sometimes, as in the case of Saar Territory and Austria, the sentimentalists are divided, or forced to perform a quick right-about-face. From 1918 to 1933 the British "Poor Little Nation" busybodies demanded the right of the populations in Saar Territory and Austria to be united with Germany, and roundly condemned French and British Governments for

their alleged opposition. Now that Hitler is in power they are demanding that Austria and the Saar be prevented from joining Germany. Germany, of course, is working the same appeal to sentiment, in the reverse direction, and is asking the German workers to shed tears (and, if need be, go to war) in order to bestow on Saar Territory and Austria the honour and privilege of being restored to the great family of Germans.

It is all a gigantic racket, worked by the forces of capitalism, using muddle-headed sentimentalists as their tools and dupes. When the avowed enemies of Socialism, or its false friends, tell you that Socialists have a hand in this business you will know that they are lying. Socialists are not supporters of capitalist Nationalism anywhere or at any time.

Lord Beaverbrook, who supported the last Great War, is now using his newspapers to popularise the policy of isolation from European entanglements. He says that Britain should never again go to war because of the quarrels of Continental nations. If Germany wants to eat up Austria, Poland wants Dantzig, and France wants Saar Territory, let them do whatever they please. It is, he says, none of "our" business. So far so good. Socialists will heartily agree. We can also agree with his ridicule of the contrary position taken up by the Labour Party (which Lord Beaverbrook's newspapers, with studied dishonesty, refer to as the "Socialist Party"). But even so, Lord Beaverbrook's own position is every bit as ridiculous and anti-working class, for while telling the workers not to fight in the quarrels of the Continental Governments, his papers are insisting on the maintenance of a "strong central Government" under British control in India. In other words, English workers should not fight to prevent Austria going over to Germany, but should fight in order to prevent the Indian capitalists from obtaining undivided control in India. Why, Lord Beaverbrook? What does it matter to English workers which group of capitalists gets the loot, the wealth extracted from the exploitation of the workers? It is the job of the workers in each country to deal with the capitalist class in that country. The Indian workers will some day deal with the Indian section as we shall with the English. But Lord Beaverbrook, anxious for the investments of British capitalists in India, in effect wants English workers to fight defending those investments against Indian capitalist interests.

An authority on the subject of small nations is Mr. Vernon Bartlett. Writing in the *News-Chronicle* on October 5th, he told us all about the Saar, all that is, except the one thing which really determines the issue. He told us what were the chances of Saar Territory going to France, or Germany, or remaining under League of Nations control. He told us that the French and German

Governments are pouring millions of marks into the Saar each month, in order to influence the voting. What he did not tell us was what are the chances of Saar Territory going neither to the Germans, nor the French, nor the League of Nations, but to the population who live there. He left it out, if he thought of it at all, because he knows it is not even dreamed of. None of the interests concerned would permit such a thing. If there were any possibility of the Saarland workers (and English workers) voting for taking over the mines, land, factories, etc., for the use of the community as a whole, and thus dispossessing the French and German and English capitalists, who own them, not only France and Germany, but the whole capitalist world, including Lord Beaverbrook, would be aghast. Whether in the Saar or in England they would all rush forward to stop such infamy.

The capitalist interests, which use patriotism, religion, national independence, and love of the scenes and traditions of particular geographical areas as a means of provoking national hatreds, are not concerned at all with the interests or convenience of the working class, but only with protecting their own property, markets, investments, and so on. Fighting to gain or protect national independence serves no interest, except that of the capitalist class. It solves no problem, not even that of nationality, for each success by one nationalist movement creates other similar problems. Socialism alone can solve the real problem of the working class, the poverty problem, and will in so doing restore national differences to a position in which they will cease to be a danger to the world.

H.

## RAMBLE

TO

### CHISLEHURST & ELTHAM DISTRICT

On Sunday, December 2nd.

Meet outside London Bridge Station (Findlater's Corner), at 10 a.m. Fare, about 1/6 return.

## BLOOMSBURY. SOCIAL

An informal Social will be held at Bloomsbury Branch  
On Saturday, November 10th, at 8 p.m.

Will those members and friends who intend to come please notify the Branch Secretary, Miss B. FOSTER, A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C.1.

Refreshments will be available at the Social. There will be no charge for admission, but a collection will be taken.

## EDUCATIONAL COURSE FOR PARTY MEMBERS.

Classes will be held at HEAD OFFICE on Sundays from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., as follows:—

November 4th	"The Reformation and Puritan Revolution."
" 11th	"The Industrial Revolution."
" 18th	"The French Revolution."
" 25th	"The Paris Commune."
December 2nd	"Causes and Consequences of the World War."

## NOTTINGHAM

A LECTURE, under the auspices of the Cosmo Debating Society, at Lecture Theatre, University College, Shakespeare Street, Nottingham, on Sunday, Dec. 2nd, at 2.30 p.m.

Subject	Speaker
"Lessons of Germany for Socialists"	A. Kohn

Sympathisers Note. Meeting in Market Place at 7.30.

## LEYTON.

Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. Sunday evenings at 8 p.m. Doors open 7.45.

November 4th	"Is War Inevitable?"	WILMOT
" 11th	"Why the S.P.G.B. stands for Revolution"	GOLDSTEIN.
" 18th	"What Socialism Really Means"	REYNOLDS
" 25th	"Superstitions, Old and New"	SANDY
December 2nd	"Communist Party and the Class Struggle"	CASH

Questions and discussion. Admission free. All invited.

## ISLINGTON

Meetings will be held at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, on Friday evenings at 8 p.m.

November 9th	"Trade Unionism and Socialism"	WILTSHIRE.
November 23rd	"Hero Worship."	S. GLOBUS.

Questions and discussion. Admission free. All invited.

## WOOD GREEN

A Lecture will be given on Friday, 2nd November, at 8 p.m., at Sterling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

Subject	Speaker
"The Class Struggle—What is it?"	A. C. Omrade.

Admission free. Questions and discussion. All invited.

## BLOOMSBURY

Lectures will be given on Monday evenings at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, (Corner of Guildford Street), W.C.1.

November 5th	"Japan and the World To day"	STUART.
" 12th	"Civilisation and Slavery"	GILMAC.
" 19th	"The Banking System"	JAMES.
" 26th	"The Evolution of the Machine"	KERSLEY.

Admission Free. Questions and discussion. All invited.



## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

NOVEMBER,



1934

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

All communications for the Executive Committee. Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 42, Great Dover Street, London, S.E.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

### TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Twelve Months, post free .. .. .	2s. 6d.
Six Months, post free .. .. .	1s. 3d.

## 1904—1934 and Progressing

The first number of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* appeared in September, 1904. From that month to this it has appeared regularly every month, advocating the same policy and aiming at the same objective. It is the only paper left of those in 1904 claiming to represent the interests of the working class.

Incidentally, it is interesting to notice that the old organisations have also gone along with the papers they published, for, now that the I.L.P. has become practically a limb of the Communist Party, it would hardly be fair to saddle it with the views of its parent.

The members who saw the first issue of our paper in print were young and hopeful. In spite of the difficulties of the time they expected to see Socialism here during their life-time. Progress has been slower than they anticipated, but for all that it has been solid and greater than appears from a first glance.

The standard of education of the workers is higher than in those earlier times, and Socialist ideas are widespread. In fact, Socialism is no longer the view of cranks, but is something to be reckoned with. Dictatorships are partly efforts to kill the dragon.

As reform movements collapse and the Labour Party, with its satellites, reap the whirlwind that eventually reaches the discredited reformer, the prospects for Socialism will become brighter.

Russia is steadily proceeding with its industrialisation programme and, unless anything unforeseen happens, will one day take its place as a first-class capitalist power. It will eventually destroy its alien Communist supporters and bring to an end the

Communist movement that has spread a blight over the movement for Socialism since the war.

One thing above all is essential to ensure the triumph of Socialism, and that is the enthusiastic advocacy of our principles and policy by those who accept them. Given this enthusiastic support then there is every reason to believe that Socialism will be a matter of our life-time. It is just because Socialism is a practical question of to-day, and not an ideal of a hundred years ahead, that we are organised in the Socialist Party of Great Britain. Consequently, we urge all really practical workers to give our principles and our policy their serious consideration. The more convinced and enthusiastic advocates we have the sooner will Socialism be here, and with it an end to our economic troubles.

It should be an inducement to waverers to know that here is a Party whose principles are so soundly based on facts that they have been a safe political anchorage for thirty years, through peace and war and post-war troubles.

## Where the Labour Parties Fail

### AN AUSTRALIAN EPISODE

(Continued from October issue)

In the first article we had described the organisational campaign carried on by the "Socialisation" groups inside the Australian Labour Party. They had succeeded in forming a complete organisation which, while sketchy in parts, practically amounted to a party within a party. The leaders realised that, if such development went on unchecked it would sooner or later challenge the existing control. This was too much, and rumbles of the approaching storm became evident.

The Socialisationists, realising that control of the Executive was essential, organised accordingly, and candidates favourable to them were supported for all districts and unions; but at the elections for the 1933 Executive they were overwhelmingly defeated, and from this date the fate of the movement was sealed. During the developments referred to above, even the leader, J. T. Lang, had at times been forced to pay lip service to Socialism. At a public meeting at North Sydney he said:—

"The Capitalist system is responsible . . . . . The system could not be mended. Therefore, the quicker it was ended the better." (*Labour Daily*, 6/12/32.)

But all this ended at the beginning of 1933 with the installation of the new Executive.

At the Goulburn Provincial Conference of Country delegates, held early in 1933, Lang laid down the policy to be pursued by the Party in the next elections, and threw down the challenge to the Socialisation section. The policy for the future was to be "Socialisation of Credit," and Mr. Lang,

true to the reformist basis of the Labour Party, concentrated his attack upon the banks as the real and only villains of the situation. The policy of Lang and the Executive was adopted at Goulburn, but the situation at the Metropolitan Provincial Conference, which followed shortly was different. Here the Socialisationists, due to their intense activity, had a majority and used it, defeating the resolutions of the Lang faction and passing a compromise resolution in which Langs' "Socialisation of Credit" was placed as part of the question of the "Socialisation of Industry."

Mr. Lang, in addressing the Conference, restated his policy and made some general references to the struggles of those in the movement, and said:—

"False friends will arise from your own ranks to lead you into confusion and discord. The integrity of loyal men will be challenged; traitors will be given the appearance of patriots."

Next morning, 13/2/33, the *Labour Daily*, controlled by Lang and Co., issued an attack upon the majority of the Conference delegates, head-lined across the page as follows:—

"CUNNING ATTEMPT IS MADE TO SMASH LANG."

"Clique organised in name of Socialisation branches attack at A.L.P. Metropolitan Conference. The capitalist Press Campaign bears fruit. Leaders grave warning becomes reality."

This marked the beginning of an unscrupulous campaign, in which the power of the *Labour*

*Daily* and the whole official machinery of the A.L.P. were used to crush the opposition within the Party. All the tricks of distortion, evasion, suppression and misrepresentation common to the

gutter Press were used to assure that the delegates to the Easter Conference should be on the side of Lang and the Executive. To such effect was this done that the Easter Conference contained only a small minority of representatives of the Socialisation section, and the movement was squashed.

### Defeat and Disintegration

This was done simply by resolutions declaring the Units, as separate entities, abolished, thus destroying the basis of their organisation; by electing a Socialisation Committee composed of nominees of the Executive, and by declaring that all lecturers for the A.L.P. must be endorsed by this Committee. Thus the effort of three years was destroyed in as many hours, and the "Socialisation Movement" fell; the notorious J. S. Garden, Secretary of the Labour Council of N.S.W., foundation member and former General Secretary of the Communist Party of Australia, and now a member of the Labour Party, and chief organiser for J. T. Lang, acting as the stage manager for its obsequies.

The active socialisationists did not submit without a struggle; but it was in vain. In its attempt to confront the situation, all the weaknesses inherent in its composition became evident. During the time which elapsed between the Metropolitan and Easter Conferences the Committee and its supporters had carried on, and intensified their organisation, published

special issues of the "Socialisation Call," organised the collection of funds, printed and distributed leaflets in an endeavour to defeat the propaganda of their opponents.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.**

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



Late in 1932 a split had occurred among the leaders of the Socialisation Section itself, and the breakaway faction had formed a rival organisation, called the A.L.P. Rank and File Committee, and accepting the Communist doctrine of the United Front, had set out to draw to themselves all the like-minded elements in the movement.

Despite the fact that it was outlawed, the Committee, under the guise of an Anniversary Aggregate Meeting, held a conference at the Redfern Boot Trades Hall, on April 22nd, 1933. This meeting, though attended by over 200 delegates, representative of the Units, Group Councils, etc., was foredoomed to failure, and ended in disorder, most of the time of the meeting being wasted in a wrangle between the leaders of the two "Socialist" factions. A further conference, held on May 14th, was as futile as the first. The resolutions discussed at these "conferences" do not matter. The actual situation was, that the delegates were a group of "Socialisers" who had been shown plainly enough that the Labour Party did not want them, and they reacted to that injunction according to their understanding. Some wanted to form a separate party, some to stay in the A.L.P. and work upon a United Front Basis (i.e., be the catspaw of the Communist Party in its confusionist endeavours) some wanted to stay in the Labour Party because they believed in it, or for what they could get out of it.

Both conferences revolved around a point of no real concern to any intelligent worker, the fight between the A.L.P. and the Communist Party, and the nostrums they represent.

So ended an attempt to realise the dreams of those who think that Labour Parties can be transformed into instruments of emancipation. The words of Frederick Engels cannot be too often quoted:—

"For as long as the oppressed class, in this case the proletariat, is not ripe for its economic emancipation, just so long will its majority regard the existing order of society as the only one possible, and form the tail, the extreme left wing of the capitalist class." (Origin of the Family.)

That quotation epitomises the function of the Labour Party and the political outlook of its members. For the tremendous task involved in the achievement of Socialism, nothing less than a Party firmly based and built upon clean-cut Socialist principles will serve. Don't waste time wandering in the political wilderness of Labour politics. Realise that the achievement of emancipation presupposes the widespread understanding of a statement no Labour Party has yet comprehended:—

"Socialism is the only hope. All else is illusion."

While it may seem that the great membership and widespread organisation of the Labour Parties would be capable of tremendous achievement for Socialism, the facts are, that they cannot be turned

to such a purpose, for Socialism is beyond the horizon for all but the insignificant minority of their members.

The futility of boring from within in such organisations can be exemplified by the statement of a Labour Party speaker in a debate at North Sydney (N.S.W.), who, while stating the ultimate object of the Labour Party to be the achievement of Socialism, said the possibility of such achievement would not arise for the next 500 years, and went on to put forward the reform policy which was, to him, all that mattered.

In a world rotten-ripe for Socialism, the true Labourite sees only the urgent necessity for his reform policy, the Socialist sees its utter futility. To attempt to organise for the achievement of Socialism in such parties is as futile as the search of the mediæval alchemist for the Elixir of Life.

If the Socialist analysis of capitalism is correct, no reform or set of reforms can overcome the disabilities of working-class life while the system continues. The Labour Parties of the world, whatever lip-service they may pay to Socialism as an ideal, are based upon, and operate upon, the fundamental assumption that capitalism can be so reformed. The two conceptions are mutually antagonistic, and attempt to compromise between them leads inevitably away from the Socialist position, and into the morass of disillusion and despair.

Before Socialism can be achieved the majority of the people must understand the necessity for it. Once that is reached its realisation is inevitable; but no progress in this direction can be made by supporting the false doctrines preached by the reformers.

The essential pre-requisite for the achievement of Socialism is the making of Socialists. Join up and help forward this work F. F. W.  
(Socialist Party of Australia.)

## INDEX to "SOCIALIST STANDARD"

The Index for the year ended August, 1934, is now on sale. In order to decrease the loss on the sale of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD Index, the price has been raised to 2d. per copy (2½d. post free).

Order now from Literature Secretary, 42, Great Dover Street, S.E.1, or nearest branch.

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(The size of the page was altered in September, 1918, and again in September, 1932. Series extending over these dates must therefore be bound in separate volumes.)

## The French Revolution

The workers are always being told that they must pull with their masters—the capitalists; they are told that "class-struggle" and "revolution" spell ruin for the "nation." Yet, once, the capitalists themselves were revolutionaries and they fought out the culmination of a class-struggle against the feudal aristocracy which ended in the overthrow of the latter and the victory of the capitalists. Having gained political power, the capitalist class transformed society to suit its needs and then became reactionary—it had become the ruling class and had to maintain its newly-won position against its wage-slaves, the working class.

In France this class-struggle between capitalists and feudal lords reached its climax in the 18th century. The feudal lords themselves, formerly revolutionary, now showed every sign of being a decadent and useless class. Previously, they had governed areas of land, administering justice and raising armies; now, many of them were living at Versailles at the King's court, whilst Intendants (often of capitalist origin) replaced them in their work. As of yore, however, these feudal lords were exempt from taxation, and the peasants were required to work so many days a year on the lands of their masters. In short, the nobility had long ceased to do any useful work for society, their chief function being to idle away their lives at Versailles, squandering money and contracting debts, except when doing such important work as putting the King to bed!

But what of the capitalists at this period? Far from being a decadent class, as was the aristocracy, they showed plenty of vigour, attacking everything which upheld feudalism, the system then prevailing. They had been growing richer and richer for over two centuries, i.e., ever since the Age of Discovery, when trade sprang up between Europe and the newly-discovered lands. In France, the feudal lords held themselves aloof from the commercial enterprises in which the capitalists prospered and grew rich. And yet the French capitalists were not satisfied, for industry and trade, which were causing them to grow rich, were hindered by feudalism. There was no unity in France; provinces were like separate kingdoms in that goods entering them were subject to tariffs; often, also, different provinces had different systems of law and different weights and measures. (In the north there were 285 different codes of law. A "perche" at Paris equalled 34 metres. In other places it equalled 51 or 42 metres. Imagine the difficulties that would arise when two merchants of different towns were trading!—"Histoire de France," Vol. II, p. 20. Malet and Isaac.) Lastly, many guilds still survived (a good number had already disappeared) which protected the artisan by restricting competition in industry. This state of affairs, which had served well enough

when there was no, or very little, trade, was now obnoxious to the rising capitalists, for it cramped their commerce and industry. To be able to develop capitalism freely, the capitalist needed a united France, a France without internal trade barriers.

Gradually, as the 18th century passed, the French capitalists became more and more determined to change the system, especially when the Government's attempts at reform met with failure. It began to see that no other class could do this work for it, and that political power was necessary. Writers began to give expression to the needs of the rising class. Feudalism was attacked, and the people and things which upheld that system: feudal lords, Absolute Monarchy and the Church. Among the many writers, Quesnay and Gournay wanted complete freedom in trade and industry, Montesquieu demanded a monarchy limited and controlled by representatives of the nation, and Voltaire attacked the Church. The French capitalists, then, were revolutionary in the 18th century, awaiting the opportunity to transform society to suit their needs. This opportunity came in 1789 when the court (i.e., the Government) was short of money. Previously the capitalists had made loans, but they now refused until the monarchy had promised to call the Estates-General. (This institution, which had not met since 1614, resembled the English Parliament. It had, however, three Orders or Chambers: the Nobility, the Clergy and the Third Estate.) The calling of the Estates-General gave the capitalists the chance for which they had been waiting, the chance of gaining political power.

When it was decided to call the Estates-General, two very important questions needed to be solved. Previously, the Estates-General had been composed of the three Orders which had equal representation and which sat and voted in different chambers. Now the capitalists demanded that the Third Estate should have double representation (i.e., as many as the other two orders together), and that noble, clergyman and bourgeois should all vote together, decisions being reached by majority vote. By this method the French capitalist class saw that it could gain political power. The nobility, the reactionary class, seeing that their position would be in danger if the demands of the capitalists were granted, urged that the Estates should be constituted as of old. The attacks of the capitalists were vigorous, and the King, depending upon them for financial aid, granted double representation to the Third Estate, whilst postponing, until the meeting of the Estates, the question as to whether the Orders should form one chamber or three.

When the Orders met at Versailles on May 5th, 1789, a conflict between the feudal lords and the representatives of capital broke out immediately—the former demanding that the three-chamber



method of voting be retained, the latter demanding a single assembly. The capitalists realised that, despite their double representation, they would always be outvoted 2—1 by the nobles and clergy, if voting was carried out by three separate bodies. Having a great deal at stake they would not give in. The conflict lasted six weeks. They refused to be called an "Order" and refused to elect a president. They sent deputies to demand that the other Orders should join them. The nobility, knowing well that this would mean its loss of power, and a victory for the capitalists, decided to sit apart by 173 votes to 79. The clergy was split more than the nobility, and some of them even submitted to the capitalists' demands, left their Order and joined the Third Estate. This gave courage to the capitalists; they decided to wait no longer for the nobles, and, on June 17th, took the name "The National Assembly." The King would have liked to have dissolved the Assembly, but he dared not, because he relied upon the capitalists for loans, and also because he knew that they had the backing of the majority of the French population, i.e., of the peasants. (Madelin, in his "French Revolution," shows how the bourgeoisie had won the support of the peasants during the elections—p. 24). Whilst the King was hesitating the whole of the clergy went over to the capitalists (June 19th). The latter were soon to show their thanks to the clergy by stripping the Church of most of its wealth.

At last the King decided that the three Orders should sit apart. He went to the Assembly and ordered it to break up. The bourgeoisie refused, for already it had stirred up the people of Paris, who began to invade the court-yard. The King saw that the people were against him, and, still being in need of money, had to command that all three Orders should sit together and form a separate chamber. Now the victory of the capitalists was assured. They had gained political power. Having double representation, they could always out-vote the nobility and clergy in a single chamber.

When they had gained ruling power, the capitalists transformed society to their needs, and then made secure their newly-won position against the working class (i.e., they became reactionary). Here are some of the things they did:—

They abolished feudalism and freed commerce and industry, so that capitalism could develop unhindered. Weights and measures were made uniform throughout France.

They made sure of retaining political power in the future by establishing a constitution. It is important to note that, despite the "Rights of Man" voted in August, 1789, in which all men were declared "equal," universal suffrage was not adopted. In 1791, for example, only about 43,000 individuals were eligible to vote for the deputies to the Chamber. As Madelin points

out, the bourgeois "were as undemocratic at bottom as men well could be, and their feeling for the masses was nothing but a mixture of scorn and fear. 'The perfect type of the bourgeois of '89,' writes M. Meynier de la Reveillière, 'combining hatred of the nobles and distrust of the mob!'" (P. 23.)

They raised a citizen militia, the National Guard, to protect their interests from the attacks of the nobles and from the demands of the working-class. In every city and town, National Guards were formed. Whenever the workers, thinking they were to get something out of the Revolution, rebelled, they were speedily dispersed by the new army.

They forbade workers to deliberate together or form trade unions.

In this article we have shown that the capitalists have themselves been revolutionary, attacking every prop of the system they wanted to overthrow; that they were able to effect their revolution only when they had gained political power; and that soon they became reactionary, being content to consolidate their position as dominant class, so as to be able to withstand the demands of the workers. When the workers become revolutionary, they, too, will gain political power, but will use it to abolish private property in the means of production and distribution. However, they will not become reactionary, for the working-class is the last class striving for emancipation. Another difference between the workers' revolution and that of the capitalists lies in the fact that whereas the French revolution was in the interests of a small minority, the workers' revolution will be in the interests of the immense majority. BABEUF.

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42 Great Dover Street, S.E.1

## Address to the Communist League (1850)<sup>1</sup>

By KARL MARX.

We are indebted to the Editor of the *Labour Monthly* for permission to print Marx's Address to the Communist League (1850), published in the *Labour Monthly*, London, September, 1922. The footnotes also are taken from the *Labour Monthly*, "M. B." being Max Beer.

The Address is an important historical document. The international association for which it was written—the Communist League—was formed in 1847, out of an earlier body, the Federation of the Just. Marx and Engels assisted in the work of the newly-formed League and were commissioned late in 1847 to prepare the Communist Manifesto, which was completed on the eve of the revolutionary movements which shook Europe early in 1848. Whereas the Communist Manifesto was drafted by Marx and Engels under the influence of these revolutionary upheavals, the rumblings of which were already to be heard while it was being written, the Address to the Communist League was written by Marx two years later, when the revolutionary movements were over and most of the prominent members of the League were exiles in London.

The Address contains many instructive passages, among which may be mentioned the recommendation that the independent working class party should put up independent working class candidates at elections, even where there was no chance of their being elected. "They must not allow themselves to be diverted from this work by the stock argument that to split the vote of the democrats means assisting the reactionary parties." It will be observed that Marx's view on this question in 1850 coincides with that of the S.P.C.B., and is in striking contrast with that of the Communist Party of Great Britain, which for many years supported avowed anti-Socialists at elections.

Also it will be noticed that Marx considered the attitude of the workers towards the "petty bourgeois democracy" (i.e., the Capitalist Liberals) during each of three periods. During the first period (the period "in which the petty bourgeois democracy is also oppressed") he advised the working class party to retain its independence, and to consent to no more than a temporary understanding for joint resistance to the common enemy. During this period armed resistance was to be one of the methods used by the workers.

During the second period (the period of revolutionary struggles) the working class should try to organise and arm themselves as a means of protection against their temporary allies.

For the third period (the period when the "petty bourgeois democrats" have conquered power from the defeated aristocracy, with the assistance of the workers) Marx says nothing about armed resistance. On the contrary, he turns his attention to the need for making full and proper use of the franchise.

It will be observed that here, as on other occasions, Marx greatly over-estimated the ease with which the workers could gain political power, and assumed, quite wrongly, that their victory over the Capitalists would be speedy. The tactics he advocated in the last few paragraphs were based on this wrong assumption. In this connection we must, of course, bear in mind the early period of his life at which the address was written, and its pioneer character.

ED. COMM.

### ADDRESS OF THE CENTRAL AUTHORITY TO THE LEAGUE.

Brethren,—During the last two years of revolution (1848-49) the League doubly justified its existence. First, by the vigorous activity of our members; in all places and movements where they

<sup>1</sup> Text taken from Max Beer's forthcoming *Inquiry into Dictatorship*.

happened to be at that time they were foremost in the Press, on the barricades, and on the battlefields of the proletariat, the only revolutionary class in society. Secondly, through the League's conception of the whole upheaval, as enunciated in the circular letter of the Congresses and the Central Executive in 1847,<sup>2</sup> and particularly in the Communist Manifesto. This conception has been verified by the actual happenings of the last two years. Moreover, the views of the present-day social conditions, which we in former years used to propagate in secret meetings and writings, are now public property and are preached in the market-places and in the street corners.

On the other hand, the former rigid organisation of the League has considerably loosened, a great number of members who directly participated in the revolution have come to the conclusion that the time for secret organisation was passed, and that public propaganda alone would be sufficient. Various districts and communities lost contact with the Central Authority and have not resumed it. While the Democratic Party, the party of the petty bourgeoisie, enlarged and strengthened their organisation, the working-class Party lost its cohesion, or formed local organisations for local purposes, and therefore was dragged into the democratic movement and so came under the sway of the petty bourgeoisie. This state of things must be put an end to; the independence of the working class must be restored. The Central Authority, as far back as the winter of 1848-49, saw the necessity for reorganisation and sent the missionary, Joseph Moll,<sup>3</sup> but this mission had no lasting result. After the defeat of the revolutionary movement in Germany and France in June, 1849, nearly all the members of the Central Authority reunited in London, supplemented by new revolutionary forces, and took the work of the reorganisation seriously in hand.

This reorganisation can only be accomplished by a special missionary, and the Central Authority thinks it most important that the missionary should start on his journey at this moment when a new upheaval is imminent; when therefore the working-class Party should be thoroughly organised and act unanimously and independently, if it does not wish again to be exploited and taken in tow by the bourgeoisie, as in 1848.

We have told you, brethren, as far back as in 1848, that German Liberalism would soon come to power and would at once use it against the working class. You have seen how this has been fulfilled.

<sup>2</sup> These circular letters are lost.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Moll, a German watchmaker, had been in London since 1840. As a Communist he also took part in the Chartist movement, in the Physical Force Wing, and had some heated discussions with Thomas Cooper, after the latter had turned a Moral Force man. Moll joined the German revolution in 1848-49, and fell in battle on July 19th, 1849, at Baden.—M.B.



It was the bourgeoisie who, after the victorious movement of March, 1848, took the reins of government, and the first use they made of their power was to force back the working man, their allies in the fight against absolutism, to their former oppressed condition. They could not achieve their purpose without the assistance of the defeated aristocracy, to whom they even transferred governmental power, securing, however, for themselves the ultimate control of the Government through the budget. . . .

The part which the Liberals played in 1848, this treacherous rôle will at the next revolution be played by the democratic petty bourgeoisie, who, among the parties opposing the Government, are now occupying the same position which the Liberals occupied prior to the March revolution. This democratic party, which is more dangerous to the working men than the Liberal Party was, consists of the following three elements:—

- (i) The more progressive members of the upper bourgeoisie, whose object it is to sweep away all remnants of feudalism and absolutism;
- (ii) The democratic-constitutional petty bourgeoisie, whose main object it is to establish a democratic federation of the Germanic States;
- (iii) The republican petty bourgeoisie, whose ideal it is to turn Germany into a sort of Swiss republic. These republicans are calling themselves "reds" and "social democrats" because they have the pious wish to remove the pressure of large capital upon the smaller one, and of the big bourgeoisie upon the petty bourgeoisie.

All these parties, after the defeat they have suffered, are calling themselves republicans or reds, just as in France the republican petty bourgeoisie are calling themselves Socialists. Where, however, they have the opportunity of pursuing their aims by constitutional methods they are using their old phraseology and are showing by deed that they have not changed at all. It is a matter of course that the changed name of that party does not alter their attitude towards the working class; it merely proves that in their struggle against the united forces of absolutism and large capitalists they require the support of the proletariat.

The petty bourgeois democratic party in Germany is very powerful. It embraces not only the great majority of the town population, the small traders and craftsmen, but also the peasantry and the agricultural labourers, in so far as the latter have not yet come into contact with the proletariat of the towns. This revolutionary working class acts in agreement with that party as long as it is a question of fighting and overthrowing the Aristocratic-Liberal coalition; in all other things the revolutionary working class must act independently.

The democratic petty bourgeoisie, far from desiring to revolutionise the whole society, are aiming only at such changes of the social conditions as would make their life in existing society more comfortable and profitable. They desire above all a reduction of national expenditure through a decrease of bureaucracy, and the imposition of the main burden of taxation on the landowners and capitalists. They demand, likewise, the establishment of State banks and laws against usury, so as to ease the pressure of the big capitalist upon the small traders and to get from the State cheap credit. They demand also the full mobilisation of the land, so as to do away with all remnants of manorial rights. For these purposes they need a democratic constitution which would give them the majority in Parliament, municipality, and parish.

With a view to checking the power and the growth of big capital the democratic party demand a reform of the laws of inheritance and legacies, likewise the transfer of the public services and as many industrial undertakings as possible to the State and municipal authorities. As to the working man—well, they should remain wage workers: for whom, however, the democratic party would procure higher wages, better labour conditions, and a secure existence. The democrats hope to achieve that partly through State and municipal management and through welfare institutions. In short, they hope to bribe the working class into quiescence, and thus to weaken their revolutionary spirit by momentary concessions and comforts.

The democratic demands can never satisfy the party of the proletariat. While the democratic petty bourgeoisie would like to bring the revolution to a close as soon as their demands are more or less complied with, it is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent, to keep it going until all the ruling and possessing classes are deprived of power, the governmental machinery occupied by the proletariat, and the organisation of the working classes of all lands is so far advanced that all rivalry and competition among themselves has ceased; until the more important forces of production are concentrated in the hands of the proletarians. With us it is not a matter of reforming private property, but of abolishing it; not of hushing up the class antagonism, but of abolishing the classes; not of ameliorating the existing society, but of establishing a new one. There is no doubt that, with the further development of the revolution, the petty bourgeois democracy may for a time become the most influential party in Germany. The question is, therefore, what should be the attitude of the proletariat, and particularly of the League, towards it:—

- (i) During the continuation of the present conditions in which the petty bourgeois democracy is also oppressed?

- (ii) In the ensuing revolutionary struggles which would give them momentary ascendancy?

- (iii) After those struggles, during the time of their ascendancy over the defeated classes and the proletariat?

(To be continued.)

### THE S.L.P. AND THE CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

We have received the following letter from a reader in Vancouver:—

"Vancouver, B.C.,

"Canada.

"Comrades,

"September 21st, 1934.

"In the September issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD, in reference to conduct of public meetings, you publish a statement of the Secretary of the British Section of the Socialist Labour Party, quoting that they allow questions and open discussion at all propaganda meetings.

"In this respect the British Section are ahead of the American Section, as last month (Thursday, August 16th), at the Victory Hall, Vancouver, I attended a meeting of the S.L.P., addressed by Eric Haase. Questions were allowed, but discussion was not allowed, and when the Chairman's decision was protested from the floor he adjourned the meeting.

"I might add, the speaker was in difficulty over a question of the Communists dealing with the 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat,' but the meeting was orderly, and the attitude of the Chairman could only be construed as evidence of the weakness of the position of the S.L.P.

### WHAT THEY WERE FIGHTING FOR

Mr. Lloyd George's "War Memories" (Vol. III) recall the wartime controversies about the secret treaties in which the Allied Governments set down their real war aims, which were in violent contrast with their published ones. General Smuts, at one time beloved of the "peace-by-negotiation" groups, wrote a report for Mr. Lloyd George when the latter was Premier. It contained the aims for which he thought the War should be waged and hundreds of thousands of workers' lives should be thrown away. Here are the first two aims:—

(a) Destruction of the German Colonial System, with a view to the future security of all communications vital to the British Empire. This has already been done—an achievement of enormous value which ought not to be endangered at the peace negotiations.

(b) Tearing off from the Turkish Empire all parts that may afford Germany opportunity of expansion to the Far East and of endangering our own position as an Asiatic Power. This has essentially been achieved, although the additional conquest of Palestine may be necessary to complete the task.

### HACKNEY

Lectures are given at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, every Friday evening, at 8.30 p.m.

November 2nd	-	"Emotion"	D. RUSSELL
" 9th	-	"Marxism and Literature"	M. BARITZ
" 16th	-	"Hitlerism: Its Cause and Cure"	A. KOHN
" 23rd	-	"Socialism in our Time"	E. HARDY
" 30th	-	"Marxism and Darwinism"	C. LESTER

All invited. Admission free. Questions and discussion

### BATTERSEA

A Lecture will be given at Latchmere Baths, on Thursday, November 8th, at 8.30 p.m.

Subject	Speaker
"What is the Class Struggle?"	S. Goldstein

And on Thursday, November 29th—

Subject	Speaker
"Why we Oppose all Other Political Parties"	Ross

Admission free. All invited. Questions and discussion

### BETHNAL GREEN

A Lecture will be given at Bethnal Green Library, Cambridge Road, E.1, on Friday, November 16th, at 8 p.m.

Subject	Speaker
"The Trump Card of the Working Class"	C. Lester

All invited. Admission free. Questions and discussion

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Rushcroft Road, Brixton, Opp. Lambeth Town Hall	7.30 p.m.
Sundays:	
Clapham Common	7 p.m.
Finsbury Park	5.30 p.m.
Victoria Park	6 p.m.
Brockwell Park	6 p.m.
Cock Hotel, East Ham	7.30 p.m.
Liverpool Street, Walworth, Camberwell Gate	11.30 a.m.
Kenninghall Road (Lea Bridge Road end)	8 p.m.
Southend, Sea Front	7.30 p.m.
Mondays:	
King's Hall Picture House, Bakers Arms, Leyton	8 p.m.
Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8	8 p.m.
Highbury Corner, N.	8 p.m.
"Heaton Arms," Rye Lane, Peckham, S.E.	8 p.m.
Tuesdays:	
Clissold Corner, Albion Road, N.16	8 p.m.
Wednesdays:	
West Green Corner, Tottenham, N.	8 p.m.
Windsor Road, Forest Gate, E.	8 p.m.
"Prince of Wales," Harrow Road, W.	8 p.m.
Clock Tower, Avenue Road, Lewisham, S.E.	8 p.m.
Thursdays:	
Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8	8 p.m.
"Salmon and Ball," Bethnal Green, E.	8 p.m.
Fridays:	
Ilford Station, E.	8 p.m.
"Chequers," Ripple Road, Dagenham	8 p.m.

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**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.

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# THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

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[Monthly Twopence

*The aim of  
Socialists is  
not a Utopia  
for Supermen  
but a world fit  
for human  
beings to  
live in.*

## The Chief Task of our Times

In these times of fast communications and well-organised news services, with airmen hopping half-way round the earth in a few days, we are given the advantages of knowing fully and almost at once what the other half of the world is thinking. We find that they are thinking very much the same as we are. They are thinking that life is very hard, and the outlook very cheerless, for the human race. If they are workers they are wondering why it is so difficult to get and to keep employment; why there is food and the means of producing food alongside idle men who lack a sufficiency of it; why it is that work is so drab, tedious and exhausting when obviously it could be made very much more agreeable; why

the ingenuity of craftsmen, scientists, inventors and so on is being devoted so largely to producing and perfecting weapons of destruction; why the world's statesmen all proclaim their brotherly sentiments, but cannot translate them into the practical form of abolishing or reducing the armed forces.

These and many other ques-

tions flow through the minds of the world's workers as they set off to or return from their employers' factory, mine or office, or line up at the Labour Exchange or its equivalent, in New York, in London, in Tokyo and in Berlin.

Members of the propertied classes worry their heads, too. They have their own doubts and difficulties. They wonder why the working-class animal is such a difficult, unaccountable creature. Why it will not accept all the soothing answers given to it by those in control. They wonder, too, why foreigners must keep on thrusting themselves into the markets, territories and investment areas in which capitalist interests are centred. If they are British they wonder whether to open the door to Sir Oswald Mosley, who is knocking at it, or whether they can safely slam it in his face. They wonder whether the next election may bring a Labour majority; whether that will be very disastrous for them or whether they had not better accept it, lest worse befall.

And everyone, capitalist and worker alike, Socialist and non-Socialist, bears in mind the possibility that international rivalries may sooner or later culminate in a world war more deadly than the last.

These cheerless signs are not novel, but they are more depressing for most people because many of the accustomed opiates have been taken away. It gets harder every year for an intelligent person to believe that he can safely leave the world's intricate problems to the experts, politicians, journalists and so on. There was a time when, for the average man or woman, it was comforting, and not outrageous, to stifle doubts with the thought that the leaders know all about it—leave

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it to them. But now? Will anyone confidently leave it to MacDonald and Thomas, the lost leaders of the Labour Party, or to the other leaders who ran away from the application of measures they had already agreed to? Or the statesmen who drowned the world in blood, and who now confess that they none of them want war, but do not know how to prevent it? the statesmen who say that capitalism is the best of all possible systems, but who do not know what crises are or how they arise, let alone how they can be prevented? Shall they trust their war lords of land and sea, their Haigs of Passchendaele, and their muddlers of Mesopotamia? Shall they trust their Bottomleys and Kruegers, Hatries and Insulls, or the non-criminal, but equally fatal, bankers and business men, politicians and newspaper proprietors, churchmen and lawyers, who have led them into the present stupefying chaos?

Confidence is a somewhat shop-soiled commodity these days, but those who set great store by it are now at a loss which way to turn. They would still like to believe, but there are too many awkward memories.

### The Socialist Message of Hope.

Socialists alone can look at the world without pessimism or despair. Socialists never built up false hopes, and have not been disillusioned. Seeing the world as it is we know how great the task is, but we know what can be done by determined, organised work towards a clearly-outlined goal. The world is out of joint because the social system is faulty at the foundation. The private ownership of the means of production and distribution is no longer necessary or desirable. It produces the evils of poverty, unemployment, competition, war and class hatred. It has got to be abolished. Instead of an anarchistic war of private owners seeking profit and permitting the workers to produce wealth only when profit is to be obtained by so doing, the social system needs to be refashioned on the new basis of common ownership. Society must assume possession of its means of life. The private owners must be dispossessed. Their private interests and their class privilege must not be allowed to stand in the way of social progress and the welfare of the whole community. The Socialist Party of Great Britain has taken on the great task of organising for that end. We concentrate on the one vital question, capitalism to be replaced by Socialism, private ownership to give place to common ownership, privilege to give place to equality.

Our aim is one to which the workers of the whole world can rally, "without distinction of race or sex." The Socialist movement is the one movement in the van of social progress, able to face the present world troubles with understanding and confidence.

H.

## Are You a Slave?

If the question at the head of this article be put to people to-day most of them will reply emphatically that they are not slaves; that apart from a few places abroad, slavery was abolished long years ago.

Book after book has been written denouncing or explaining the slavery of antiquity and of the Southern States of America during the last century, all with the implication that slavery has now practically disappeared.

Books are still being written and societies organised to abolish the chattel slavery that still exists in outlying parts on the ground that it is a shameful thing and a moral blot upon civilisation.

On the last point one or two preliminary remarks may perhaps be useful to illustrate a general and curious example of defective mental eyesight. The evils that exist thousands of miles away stir up the passionate indignation of people who daily pass the human wrecks of the modern industrial system without giving them a thought. People who contribute pounds to societies for the alleviation of the hardships of native peoples often would not dream of contributing a penny towards the alleviation of the poverty of the toilworn workers by means of whom they obtain their own incomes. It is easier to see the mote in a neighbour's eye than the beam in one's own.

The chattel slave was unquestionably a slave: upon that everyone is agreed. These slaves were owned just in the same way that horses and cattle are owned. They were well looked after or worked to death according to which of the two methods was most profitable to their owners. The important thing that distinguished the slaves from the owners was the fact that the slaves depended for their living upon the will of another person or class, for slaves were owned sometimes by individuals, sometimes by groups and sometimes by the privileged class as a whole. For instance, the policemen in ancient Athens, owned by the State, were Scythian slaves.

One can therefore define a slave as one who depends for his living wholly or mainly on the will of another person or class.

The chattel slaves of times gone by were employed in a variety of occupations covering the whole field of the production and distribution of the means of life of the times both as overseers and as workmen. Some even occupied at times governmental posts on behalf of the privileged. It is well known that there were Emperors of Rome who were in origin slaves, and, as such, climbed to places of influence under the patronage of their masters or mistresses. In the Southern States of America during the Civil War, the slaves carried on all the work of the plantations while the planters were away fighting.

A well-known American economist, Professor Seligman, defines slavery as "an institution designed to secure the services of others by force." While he says that this applies entirely to the chattel slave, and in a less degree to the bond worker, he looks upon all who form the citizens of modern states as outside the application of his definition.

Finally it may be pointed out that the people of chattel slaves States were split into two main groups. At the top was a relatively small, privileged class having control of Society and of the means of production. At the bottom was the mass of the people (the bulk of whom were chattel slaves) engaged in industry—whatever had to do directly with the work of getting a livelihood.

Let us now examine modern society in the light of the foregoing remarks.

Here we again find a privileged group at the top owning the means of production and possessed of the control of government. Underneath is the mass of the population, the working class, dependent on the owning class for their means of living.

In order to live the worker must find a buyer for his manual and mental energy. It does not matter what the nature of his working capacity may be, he must find employment for it in order to live. With few exceptions this is the lot of the worker from early years until old age.

To whom does the worker apply for a job? To the masters individually or collectively. It is true that it is not to the masters in person that the worker applies for a job as a rule, because nowadays the masters are usually hidden behind a company, a trust or a state concern. It is to a paid representative of these concerns that the worker must apply.

All the while the worker is at work he is haunted by the fear that he may lose his job and perhaps not get another one, or be thrown among the wreckage of the industrial system. Consequently he humbles himself in ways that sometimes make him squirm. He is respectful and subservient to those above him and to the wealthy class in general. He fears and jumps to the call of "the gov'nor." Like the chattel slave he depends for his living on the will and the whim of another. Consequently he is a slave. It is true the worker is personally free, which the chattel slave is not, but this is cold comfort when the hooter goes, calling him to his daily toil.

The capitalists as a class own the means of production, and are therefore in a position to determine when, where and how the worker shall live. There is no escape from the shackles under present conditions apart from death. The worker depends on the wage he receives in order to get the necessities of life, and he is rightly described as a

wage slave to distinguish him from other kinds of slaves.

Hypocrisy is a leading characteristic of modern times, and one often reads remarks of satisfaction over the fact that slavery is long since dead and that freedom is the right of all people to-day. Unfortunately the victims of the system are themselves only too ready to accept this view, even though they occupy abominable slums, hurry in harassed and turgid streams over the bridges in the morning, haunted by the fear of being late on the job.

Within the ranks of the working class itself there are many who suffer from the illusion that they are in a class apart from and above the common worker; in fact that their interests are identical with those of the masters as against the rest of the workers. Amongst these are scientists, managers and salaried workers of various kinds.

These types of workers would be under no delusion if they would apply to their condition the test of a slave. On what do they depend for their living? Are they dependent wholly or mainly on selling their energies for wages or salaries in order to live? If this fits their economic condition then they are members of the working class, slaves, always in fear of losing their jobs and suffering accordingly.

The point always to be borne in mind is the frailty of the hold upon that on which the living depends, and the ease and swiftness of operation of the power of the job-controllers. Many in exalted positions have had this very cruelly impressed upon them, and although they scorn the suggestion that they are enslaved, yet they take good care to placate and dance to the tune of those responsible for the salaries.

There is no escape, therefore, from the conclusion that the fundamental interest of all who depend upon wages or salaries is identical, and is opposed to the interest of those who own the means of production and pay their slaves wages or salaries. It is a slave interest opposed to an ownership interest.

The slaves of old tried to release themselves from their bonds by bloody revolts, which, however, were always suppressed, because the masters controlled the political machinery, the instrument of power. The slaves of to-day have had passed over to them the means to obtain control of the political machinery. Thus they are able to mould society to suit their needs when they know what those needs are and how they can be satisfied.

GILMAC.

### HOW TO GET TO HEAD OFFICE.

Great Dover Street is a turning out of Borough High Street, near Borough (Underground) Station. The station is on the line from Morden to Hampstead and Highgate, and lies between the Bank Station and Elephant and Castle.



## The Reward of Genius

It is claimed on behalf of capitalism that the most important part played in the production of wealth is that of outstanding men who made possible the highly-developed civilisation of to-day. Inventors, painters and literary men are held up as examples of this, the implication being that the present capitalists or their forefathers were of this select band.

On previous occasions we have shown the baselessness of these assertions and in general have pointed out how each generation simply adds its little bit to the achievements of the past, and the discovery or production put to the credit of one individual exaggerates his part in the business. Briefly, the position is similar to that of a foot-race. Society or production sets a problem and one of the participants gets there first.

We do not propose going into the matter any further at the moment, but it may be interesting to give a short list of outstanding figures in various walks of life who are accepted as having made considerable contributions to the wealth and the happiness of modern society. At the same time it may also be interesting to show how capitalism has rewarded its "men of genius."

**John Kay.**—A weaver and mechanic. Inventor of the fly shuttle, one of the most important inventions in the textile industry, as well as other inventions. He took his case to the courts in the endeavour to obtain recognition and recompense for his work: was beggared by litigation, and starved to death in France.

**Joseph Marie Jacquard.**—Inventor of the silk-weaving loom that brought about a revolution in the art of weaving. He could obtain no recognition until he was an old man. He sacrificed all he possessed to carry on his inventions, and became a labourer and a soldier.

**Henry Cort.**—Invented "puddling" process for converting pig-iron into malleable metal, as well as other inventions. He patented his inventions and became involved in law suits—like so many of his kind. He was eventually utterly ruined. The Government took up his invention and granted him a pension of £200.

**James Hargreaves.**—A carpenter. Invented the spinning jenny, but died a poor man. He suffered from dishonest manufacturers.

**Samuel Crompton.**—A cotton spinner, combined the old water frame and spinning jenny into the mule, and is considered to have been practically the organiser of modern industry. He died in poverty.

**Richard Roberts.**—Inventor of the self-acting mule: was left to fight poverty in his old age.

**Richard Trevithick.**—Inventor of high pressure steam locomotive: died in poverty.

**Gutenberg.**—Inventor of printing: was in financial difficulties all his life.

**Bernard Palissy.**—A French potter. Discovered the process for manufacture of enamel. Struggled for sixteen years in the lowest depths of poverty, having to burn his furniture to keep his fires alight. He was arrested, and died in the Bastille.

**John Harrison.**—A mechanic. Invented the marine chronometer. He was in necessitous circumstances all his life. Struggled for years to obtain the reward that had been offered for such an invention, and after considerable difficulty finally obtained it when eighty years old.

**Frederick Koenig.**—Inventor of the steam printing-machine. Had his patents infringed. After a long struggle and illnesses he died in poor circumstances.

**Eugen Turpin.**—Inventor of melenite and over forty other inventions: was always in poor circumstances.

**General Shrapnel.**—Inventor of the explosive that bears his name and that helped to build up many rich armament firms, as well as blowing thousands to eternity: died in 1842, a poor and bitter old man.

**Antoine Laurent Lavoisier.**—Described as the father of modern chemistry: had to accept a position as tax-farmer in order to carry on his experiments, and perished under the guillotine.

**Rev. Hannibal Goodwin.**—Invented film photography, and after a long fight obtained a patent in 1898. When he was about to put the film on the market, he died in 1900. His widow formed a company and carried on a fight with the powerful interests opposed to her, and finally obtained a judgment in the United States Supreme Court in 1914 that the Goodwin patent was the basis of film photography. Success, however, came too late, for Mrs. Goodwin was 81 and in failing health.

**Franz Schubert.**—A schoolmaster, whose musical compositions have delighted myriads of people and whose life has provided material for films. "Left the world," as one biographer puts it, "a rich heritage of considerably more than a thousand works of extreme brilliance, and who received in return £575 as the sum total of his life's earnings"!!!

**Count de Chardonnet.**—Inventor of artificial silk: died a poor man. In 1928 M. Heriot unveiled a statue to him at Lyons. No doubt he would have preferred a little more bread while he was alive!

**Horace van Ruith.**—A famous artist, who painted a study of Nurse Cavell that was greatly admired. At the age of 80, when living in poverty, an exhibition of his works was held covering a period of nearly 70 years, and he pathetically expressed the hope that some of them

would find purchasers and so allow him to spend his last days without depending on friends.

**Henrich Heine.**—Germany's leading lyrical poet: had a struggle for existence all his life.

**Herbert Spencer.**—The philosopher of individualism: could only complete his Synthetic Philosophy by means of the subscriptions of friends.

**Linnaeus.**—Described as the father of modern botany: had to work his way to the Universities of Lund and Upsala, living on £8 a year, and making his own boots from the bark of trees. Had he not attracted the notice of a man of similar tastes, the famous Classification of the Animal and Vegetable Kingdom might have had to find another author.

The above are only a few of the illustrations picked out of a large field and placed in a handy form for reference.

There was one inventor, however, who realised fame and fortune while his brothers struggled and starved. That one was Sir Richard Arkwright, sometime barber and horse-dealer, to whom is attributed the invention of the water-frame, which he patented in 1767. But Arkwright has the unique distinction of not having invented the contrivance that bears his name. The invention in question was actually the work of Thomas Higgs, who built a spinning machine in 1767 at the village of Leigh. This was known to Arkwright, who had married a woman from Leigh. The case was fought through the courts, and Arkwright never produced any satisfactory evidence of the origin of his invention. When the case was tried in 1785 Arkwright's patent was declared lapsed. However, he died in 1792, a knight, a high sheriff of the County of Derby, and left half a million pounds!

A full account of this case will be found in Mantoux's "Industrial Revolution" for those who are interested.

Just a word of warning before concluding. The writer is not concerned with whether all the inventions named above were in fact the work of those to whom they are ascribed. The point is the inventions in question are ascribed to them by the capitalists and their paid writers, and the reward such pillars of modern society received for their work was, in the main, worry, toil and misery, while those who owned the means of production profited by their work and amassed fortunes.

GILMAC.

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## Answers to Correspondents

### STATE CAPITALISM AND SOCIALISM

A correspondent (R. B. Winnipeg) asks us to differentiate between "State Capitalism" and "State Socialism." Although both terms are in use, particularly in Labour Party circles in this country, they are used vaguely and without any very precise meaning. Indeed, if there were any precision about the matter, the second of the two terms would not be used at all, for there can be no such system of society as "State Socialism."

Capitalism is the system of society under which we now live. Its distinguishing features are that the means of life (land, factories, railways, etc.) are privately owned; that goods are produced for sale and profit-making, not merely for use; and that wealth production is carried on by propertyless wage and salary earners, who are the employees of the capitalist or owning class. In England, the pioneer capitalist country, in the early days of capitalism the ruling class used the State power to safeguard capitalist property rights, but endeavoured as far as possible to avoid State interference in the production of wealth or in the conditions under which it was produced. Because of the need to safeguard the interests of the capitalists as a whole certain services, such as posts, telegraphs and telephones, were brought directly under the control and operation of State departments. These in no way departed from the essentials of capitalism and were correctly described as State capitalist undertakings. In some countries, notably Australia and, later, Russia, State capitalism has been carried much further than in England. Unfortunately, various groups, such as the Labour Party, lacking an understanding of the nature of capitalism and Socialism, spread confusion by describing this form of capitalism as "State Socialism," and carried on propaganda for its extension to other industries.

In the meantime, capitalism has spawned another monstrosity, exemplified in the Central Electricity Board and London Passenger Transport Board. Here the State exercises control without being responsible for the day-to-day conduct of operations and without being the legal owner of the concerns, so that we have a form of regulated capitalism midway between the early form of unregulated private capitalism and the State department capitalism on the Post Office model.

The Labour Party has quickly brought itself into line with the new fashion and has quietly buried its old plans for nationalisation.

Socialism means a system of society based upon the common ownership of the means of



living. Goods will be produced for use. There will be neither a propertied class nor a wage-earning class. It will not be "State Socialism," because the State is essentially an instrument for coercing the propertyless class in the interest of the propertied class. With the institution of a classless society the State will "wither away," leaving behind, of course, the centralised machinery of administration, which society will continue to require.

R. B. (Winnipeg).—See above for answer to question regarding "State Capitalism." We do not know anything of the book you mention. A standard work on the subject is "History of the Bank of England" (Andreades). This can be supplemented for later developments by "Banking" (Walter Leaf). A work dealing with U.S.A. and other countries is "History of Modern Banks of Issue" (Conant).

Regarding the inevitability of Socialism, see SOCIALIST STANDARD, May, 1933.

In general terms there can be only one outcome of the situation in Russia, which is that Russia will develop on capitalist lines, modified as is the case with every capitalist state, by its history traditions and particular needs.

ED. COMM.

### THE CORRESPONDENCE OF MARX AND ENGELS

"The Correspondence of Marx and Engels, 1846-1895: A Selection with Commentary and Notes" (Martin Lawrence, Ltd., 534 pages, 12/6).

This selection from the correspondence of Marx and Engels, consisting of 234 letters, is a really valuable addition to Marxian literature available in English. The letters have been selected mainly for their value in dealing with questions of theory and policy, and it is at once evident that the selection on the whole has been made with good judgment. A full review of the book will be published in an early issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

P.

### DANCE and SOCIAL

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### CORRECTION

The Notice of a Ramble for December 2nd, was in error. There will be no ramble on that date.

## Debate

### Labour Party and S.P.G.B.

A Debate was held at the Working Men's Club, Holborn, on Friday, October 19th, on the question: "Which Party is working for Socialism, the Labour Party or the S.P.G.B.?" There was an audience of 500.

#### The Case for the Labour Party

For the Labour Party, Mr. G. H. Loman, prospective Labour candidate for Kingston, first congratulated the S.P.G.B. on their analysis of the social system and the class struggle, which was the most clear, lucid, and logical which he had ever read. The Labour Party had the same object—Socialism. Its express aims were peace, freedom and justice among the nations; equal opportunity for all men and women for a healthy, self-respecting existence; and to convert industry run for private profit into a planned national economy.

Industry, however, could be socialised in all sorts of ways, he said—by confiscation or compensation. And the Labour Party had said it will pay compensation, so as to prevent inequities as between different sections of the community, and to avoid antagonising foreign Powers. We want Socialism introduced in as humane a manner as possible, and not to bring starvation in the place of poverty.

Now, said Mr. Loman, the S.P.G.B. says Parliament is the seat of power, but we believe you must first take over the financial machinery—the Bank of England. If the House of Lords were obstructive, we should abolish it as a legislative chamber. And, having a mandate from the people, we should use the armed forces to put down opposition.

Mr. Loman said that he expected his opponent to deal with the Labour Party's past. But it is not fair to quote the words or actions of leaders who have been repudiated by the solid rank and file of the Labour Party. We have done with the reformism of the past. We are going to the electorate to tell them we are out to introduce Socialism, and to convince them that Socialism is a practical alternative to the present system. We agree that only the working class can achieve the common ownership of the means of production and distribution, and the Labour Party will not accept office unless it has a majority of votes for Socialism throughout the country. But the S.P.G.B. is being idealistic when it says that the mass of the workers must first understand Socialism. The social conditions—starvation in the midst of plenty—will demand Socialism long before the workers are educated for it.

The theoretical principles of the S.P.G.B. are excellent, but it is not surprising that that Party is so small, since they oppose all other Parties—

condemn the Labour Party for administering capitalism; condemn the Russian experiment as State capitalism; condemn the I.L.P., the Co-operative movement, the Communists and the Fascists. The S.P.G.B. may not have much of a past, and they do not seem to have much of a future. If you are going to get the sympathy of the workers you must first find a point of contact. The Labour Party tells the workers what Socialism means in terms of concrete domestic measures.

#### The Case for the S.P.G.B.

For the Socialist Party of Great Britain, "Robertus" first defined its object as "the establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community."

Socialism is necessary because everywhere we are faced with the contrast between untold wealth for a few and a very much-told poverty for the many. Three-fifths of the total income of this country, for instance, is shared by one-tenth of the people, whilst only two-fifths is left to be shared among the other nine-tenths. This contrast is only possible because one class, the capitalists, own the means of production; and the only remedy, therefore, for the poverty of the workers is to convert the means of life into the common property of society as a whole.

To do this, the working class must organise, consciously and as a class, to obtain control of the political machinery (which includes the armed forces). And this task is the task of the working class itself, without regard to leaders or lords (some of them created by the Labour Party!). For the successful termination of the class struggle involves the overthrow of the capitalist class and the establishment of a classless society.

Now let us compare this clearly-defined position with that of the Labour Party. Far from having abandoned their reform programme, they have apparently coined some of the S.P.G.B. phraseology, whilst still attempting to tinker with the effects of capitalism—with profiteering, rents, slums, "peace" (!), public utilities—like all the other capitalist and reformist Parties. They call the recognition of the class struggle, "a narrow, class appeal, as all men and women of goodwill should rally . . . etc." The Labour Party has grown by marrying its old reformist intentions to the unsound ideas of the workers, by studying and manipulating their ignorance. As Mr. Salter, a Labour M.P., has said in the "New Leader": "There is not a single constituency in the country where there is a majority of convinced Socialist electors. We have plenty of districts, such as Bermondsey, where there is a Labour majority, but

it is a delusion to think that the greater number of these people understand what we mean by Socialism. They neither understand it nor want it." No wonder the shipping magnate, Lord Inchcape, could say of the first Labour Government, "You have no need to fear these people."

Now, since Socialism is necessarily international in character, the question of foreign antagonisms does not arise. Nor is there any question, for the S.P.G.B., of either compensation or confiscation: it is a matter of restitution. Restitution to the workers of the world of the wealth which they alone produce. The records of history will testify that the rise of the capitalist class to power was made in complete disregard of compensation.

Here we have, world-wide, the private ownership of the means of life, and the consequent poverty and insecurity of the workers of the world. The Socialist Party of Great Britain declare that there is one remedy—Socialism; and one method—the working class must organise themselves as a class to obtain control of the political machinery (through which social power is wielded), and establish the common ownership and democratic control of the means of life by and in the interest of the whole of human society.

F. E.

### ATTACKS ON RELIGION

A correspondent (G. M., Mildmay Park) writes complaining that at a meeting of this Party he heard the speaker, instead of expounding the case for Socialism, making abusive and insulting remarks about religion. We can assure the reader in question that abusive and insulting remarks addressed to opponents, whether religious or political, have no part in the propaganda of Socialism, and are discouraged by the S.P.G.B. The Party defines its attitude towards other political parties and towards religion in its pamphlets and in the SOCIALIST STANDARD, making the reason for our disagreement clear. With regard to the particular complaint, inquiries have failed to discover the speaker whose attitude was objected to.

ED. COMM.

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## THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

DECEMBER,



1934

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## Dictatorship Doomed

Before the Great War majority rule, parliamentary government, and democratic elections were apparently safe against attack in those countries where they had been established in greater or less degree, and in the other countries it seemed a safe assumption that the trend was in the same direction. Not, of course, that anything like an unrestricted adult franchise was the rule, rather it was the exception. And in countries such as Russia and Austria-Hungary parliamentary control over the Government was in its infancy or but little more developed. Nor could it be said that the ruling class as a whole welcomed or even passively accepted the extension of democratic methods. What they did have to do, however, was to pay lip-service to the democratic idea. When therefore the end of the war saw the monarchies overthrown in Russia, Germany and Austria, and the establishment of Republics on a wide democratic franchise, it was widely accepted that a political gain had been made which would not be lost. Simultaneously there was a world-wide movement towards the grant of the vote to women, and to men without property qualifications. The age-limit was in many countries lowered. Altogether the spread of the democratically elected parliamentary system stood out as one of the bright spots in the post-war chaos.

Now, in a brief period of 16 years, the condition of affairs to a superficial view may seem to have undergone a complete change for the worse. In the eyes of many supposedly qualified observers dictatorship, which has over-run Germany and Austria and Italy, as well as many other European countries, is in the ascendant and will win back not only the territory lost since 1914, but more besides. What reply have Socialists to

give to this development? Do we accept this view of world affairs? Do we care one way or the other? And what do we propose to do about it?

To understand the dictatorship movements we must go back to 1918. In or about that year Republics were established in Germany, Austria and Hungary, and these happenings helped to raise Labour movements either to power or to a position of great influence. That was their undoing as well as a contributory cause of the overthrow of the democratic constitutions themselves. The German Social-Democrats for instance suddenly found themselves at the head of nearly half the German electors. Not, however, because the party and the electors were Socialist, but because the monarchy, the military groups and the war-time politicians were in disfavour, because the soldiers and workers were war-weary and wanted social reforms of various kinds. Fourteen years of Social-Democratic Government or alliances with openly capitalist parties gave ample time for the mood of 1918 to pass, with the result that the Social-Democrats, and their handiwork, the Weimar Republican Constitution, alike fell into disrepute. The workers were experiencing an attempt by Social-Democrats to administer capitalism in a non-capitalist way, as if such a thing were possible. Having experienced it, at least a majority of the German population prefer Hitler, and might at an appropriate moment also declare their preference for a return of the monarchy. In Austria the position has developed on somewhat similar lines. In Italy and Hungary the rise of an aggressive minority Labour movement immediately after the war led even sooner to a reaction to dictatorship. Worst of all was the case of Russia, for much of the responsibility for retrograde developments all over Europe can be traced to that source. The Bolshevik party was probably the least open to criticism of all the parties in pre-war Second International. It had not been demoralised by the prospects of pelf and place like the Labour parties in Western Europe, and had a clearer idea of the need for political power. It gained control in 1917 on a reformist programme of "Peace, bread and land," but the leaders certainly kept those pledges to the best of their ability, and certainly intended to use their power to establish Socialism. They were, however, hopelessly and fundamentally wrong in believing such a thing possible—as we pointed out then and ever since. That they should have embarked on that impossible venture in the name of Socialism has been nothing but a tragedy for the Socialist movement. It meant among other things that they also attached a Socialist label to the reactionary and impossible doctrine of minority dictatorship. To retain power they have used all the weapons and devices of violence and cunning, intimidation and propaganda. They

have shown the way to Mussolini and Hitler. They supported insurrectionary Communist movements outside Russia, which played into the hands of capitalist reactionaries. They carried on ceaseless propaganda to belittle democratic and parliamentary methods. In short, they did much to ensure that the gains of the post-war years should everywhere be undermined.

The Socialist Party has nothing but condemnation for that effort of the Communists. Socialism is inseparably bound up with democratic methods. Socialism as a system of society is inconceivable on any but a democratic basis. The spread of the knowledge of Socialist principles, and the building up of Socialist organisation require democratic methods. That does not mean, of course, that our Socialist objective is surpassed or even rivalled in importance by the question of democracy. The Socialist movement does not and will not receive intentional assistance from the various anti-Socialist and non-Socialist bodies which profess more or less interest in the maintenance of parliamentary and democratic Government. In brief, the attitude of the Socialist Party is that we need democracy, and therefore firmly set our face against any attempt to undermine it, whether in the name of capitalism or of alleged Communism.

What of the present situation? Here we part company with those who think that dictatorship has come to stay and to grow. The backwash of disillusionment following the high hopes of 1918 has carried many dictators

into power: the position of many of them is strong and may grow stronger. Nevertheless signs are already evident of the forces which will undermine them. Russia, probably

because of fear of conflict with Japan, has sought to strengthen her position externally by joining up with the "older and fatter bandits" in the League of Nations, and internally by extending the franchise to elements hitherto excluded. Mussolini has had to introduce still further modifications of the political machinery in order to distract attention from economic causes of discontent, and is reported on good authority to have made approaches to leaders of the reformist Socialist Party of Italy, now suppressed. Hitler, now at the top of his prestige, has yet had to disband a large part of the Brown Shirt army on which he rested for popular support, but he, like all other dictators, will find in due course that he cannot do without some machinery for bringing his policy into accord to some extent with the strongest desires of the majority of the population.

In all of these countries underground propaganda is being carried on by courageous workers in spite of all the penalties and difficulties. From recent reports it is clear that the circles of the population willing to assist or at least to listen are growing slowly larger. In Austria many of the trade unions have

already reconstructed a skeleton illegal organisation, and the Social-Democrats are doing the same. Even in Russia propaganda against the dictatorship and in favour of democratic methods is at work.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments of production and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



While we, as Socialists, cannot share the illusions or condone the wrong principles and policies of the labour groups mainly responsible for this work, we recognise that they are right in attaching importance to democracy and in abhorring dictatorship. They are helping to produce or win back the conditions in which alone Socialist propaganda and organisation can flourish. Owing to their endeavours and to other reasons with which it is unnecessary to deal here, we know that the wave of dictatorship will recede. We believe that it will recede in the near future; with increasing rapidity and in large measure permanently.

## Address to the Communist League (1850)

By KARL MARX

(Concluded from November issue)

(i) At the present moment when the democratic petty bourgeoisie are everywhere oppressed, they lecture the proletariat, exhorting it to effect a unification and conciliation; they would like to join hands and form one great opposition party, embracing within its folds all shades of democracy. That is, they would like to entangle the proletariat in a party organisation in which the general social democratic phrases predominate, behind which their particular interests are concealed, and in which the particular proletarian demands should not, for the sake of peace and concord, be brought forward. Such a unification would be to the exclusive benefit of the petty bourgeois democracy and to the injury of the proletariat. The organised working class would lose its hard-won independence and would become again a mere appendage of the official bourgeois democracy. Such a unification must be resolutely opposed.

Instead of allowing themselves to form the chorus of the bourgeois democracy, the working men, and particularly the League, must strive to establish next to the official democracy an independent, a secret as well as a legal organisation of the working-class party, and to make each community the centre and nucleus of working-class societies in which the attitude and the interests of the proletariat should be discussed independently of bourgeois influences. How little the bourgeois democrats care for an alliance in which the proletarians should be regarded as co-partners with equal rights and equal standing is shown by the attitude of the Breslau democrats, who in their organ the *Oder-Zeitung* are attacking those working men who are independently organised, and whom they nick-name Socialists, subjecting them to severe persecutions. The gist of the matter is this: In case of an attack on a common adversary no special union is necessary; in the fight with such an enemy the interests of both

parties, the middle-class democrats and the working-class party, coincide for the moment, and both parties will carry it on by a temporary understanding. This was so in the past, and will be so in the future. It is a matter of course that in the future sanguinary conflicts, as in all previous ones, the working men by their courage, resolution, and self-sacrifice will form the main force in the attainment of victory. As hitherto, so in the coming struggle, the petty bourgeoisie as a whole will maintain an attitude of delay, irresolution, and inactivity as long as possible, in order that, as soon as victory is assured, they may arrogate it to themselves and call upon the workers to remain quiet, return to work, avoid so-called excesses, and thus to shut off the workers from the fruits of victory. It is not in the power of the workers to prevent the petty bourgeois democrats from doing that; but it is within their power to render their ascendancy over the armed proletariat difficult, and to dictate to them such terms as shall make the rule of the bourgeois democracy carry within itself from the beginning the germ of dissolution, and its ultimate substitution by the rule of the proletariat considerably facilitated.

The workers, above all, during the conflict and immediately afterwards, must try as much as ever possible to counteract all bourgeois attempts at appeasement, and compel the democrats to carry out their present terrorist phrases. They must act in such a manner that the revolutionary excitement does not subside immediately after the victory. On the contrary, they must endeavour to maintain it as long as possible. Far from opposing so-called excesses and making examples of hated individuals or public buildings to which hateful memories are attached by sacrificing them to popular revenge, such deeds must not only be tolerated, but their direction must be taken in hand. During the fight and afterwards the workers must seize every opportunity to present their own demands beside those of the bourgeois democrats. They must demand guarantees for the workers as soon as the democrats propose to take over the reins of government. If necessary, these guarantees must be exacted, and generally to see to it that the new rulers should bind themselves to every possible concession and promise, which is the surest way to compromise them. The workers must not be swept off their feet by the general elation and enthusiasm for the new order of things which usually follow upon street battles; they must quench all ardour by a cool and dispassionate conception of the new conditions, and must manifest open distrust of the new Government. Beside the official Government they must set up a revolutionary workers' Government, either in the form of local executives and communal councils, or workers' clubs or workers' committees, so that the bourgeois democratic Governments not only immediately lose all backing among the workers, but from the

commencement find themselves under the supervision and threats of authorities, behind whom stands the entire mass of the working class. In short, from the first moment of victory we must no longer direct our distrust against the beaten reactionary enemy, but against our former allies, against the party who are now about to exploit the common victory for their own ends only.

(ii) In order that this party, whose betrayal of the workers will begin with the first hour of victory, should be frustrated in its nefarious work, it is necessary to organise and arm the proletariat. The arming of the whole proletariat with rifles, guns, and ammunition must be carried out at once; we must prevent the revival of the old bourgeois militia, which has always been directed against the workers. Where the latter measure cannot be carried out, the workers must try to organise themselves into an independent guard, with their own chiefs and general staff, to put themselves under the order, not of the Government, but of the revolutionary authorities set up by the workers. Where workers are employed in State service they must arm and organise in special corps, with chiefs chosen by themselves, or form part of the proletarian guard. Under no pretext must they give up their arms and equipment, and any attempt at disarmament must be forcibly resisted. Destruction of the influence of bourgeois democracy over the workers, immediate independent and armed organisation of the workers, and the exaction of the most irksome and compromising terms from the bourgeois democracy, whose triumph is for the moment unavoidable—these are the main points which the proletariat, and therefore also the League, has to keep in eye during and after the coming upheaval.

(iii) As soon as the new Government is established they will commence to fight the workers. In order to be able effectively to oppose the petty bourgeois democracy, it is in the first place necessary that the workers should be independently organised in clubs, which should soon be centralised. The central authority, after the overthrow of the existing Governments, will at its earliest opportunity, transfer its headquarters to Germany, immediately call together a congress, and make the necessary proposals for the centralisation of the workers' clubs under an Executive Committee, who will have their headquarters in the centre of the movement. The rapid organisation, or at least the establishment of a provincial union of the workers' clubs, is one of the most important points in our considerations for invigorating and developing the Workers' Party. The next result of the overthrow of the existing Government will be the election of a national representation. The proletariat must see to it first that no worker shall be deprived of his suffrage by the trickery of the local authorities or Government commissioners; secondly, that beside the bourgeois democratic candidates there shall be put up everywhere working-class

candidates, who, as far as possible, shall be members of the League, and for whose success all must work with every possible means. Even in constituencies where there is no prospect of our candidate being elected, the workers must nevertheless put up candidates in order to maintain their independence, to steel their forces, and to bring their revolutionary attitude and party views before the public. They must not allow themselves to be diverted from this work by the stock argument that to split the vote of the democrats means assisting the reactionary parties. All such talk is but calculated to cheat the proletariat. The advance which the Proletarian Party will make through its independent political attitude is infinitely more important than the disadvantage of having a few more reactionaries in the national representation. The victorious democrats could, if they liked, even prevent the reactionary party having any successes at all, if they only used their newly won power with sufficient energy.

The first point which will bring the democrats into conflict with the proletariat is the abolition of all feudal rights. The petty bourgeois democrats, following the example of the first French Revolution, will hand over the lands as private property to the peasants; that is, they will leave the agricultural labourers as they are, and will but create a petty bourgeois peasantry, who will pass through the same cycle of material and spiritual misery in which the French peasant now finds himself.

The workers, in the interest of the agricultural proletariat as well as in their own, must oppose all such plans. They must demand that the confiscated feudal lands shall be nationalised and converted into settlements for the associated groups of the landed proletariat; all the advantages of large-scale agriculture shall be put at their disposal; these agricultural colonies, worked on the co-operative principle, shall be put in the midst of the crumbling bourgeois property institutions. Just as the democrats have combined with the small peasantry, so we must fight shoulder to shoulder with the agricultural proletariat. Further, the democrat will either work directly for a federal republic, or at least, if they cannot avoid the republic one and indivisible, will seek to paralyse the centralisation of government by granting the greatest possible independence to the municipalities and provinces. The workers must set their face against this plan, not only to secure the one and indivisible German republic, but to concentrate as much power as possible in the hands of the Central Government. They need not be misled by democratic platitudes about freedom of the communes, self-determination, etc. In a country like Germany, where there are so many mediæval remnants to be swept away and so much local and provincial obstinacy to be overcome, under no circumstances must parishes, towns, and



provinces be allowed to be made into obstacles in the way of the revolutionary activity which must emanate from the centre. That the Germans should have to fight and bleed, as they had done hitherto, for every advance over and over again in every town and in every province separately cannot be tolerated. As in France in 1793, so it is to-day the task of the revolutionary party in Germany to centralise the nation.

We have seen that the democrats will come to power in the next phase of the movement, and that they will be obliged to propose measures of a more or less Socialistic nature. It will be asked what contrary measures should be proposed by the workers. Of course they cannot in the beginning propose actual Communist measures, but they can (i) compel the democrats to attack the old social order from as many sides as possible, disturb their regular procedure and compromise themselves, and concentrate in the hands of the State as much as possible of the productive forces, means of transport, factories, railways, etc. (ii) The measures of the democrats, which in any case are not revolutionary but merely reformist, must be pressed to the point of turning them into direct attacks on private property; thus, for instance, if the petty bourgeoisie propose to purchase the railways and factories, the workers must demand that such railways and factories, being the property of the reactionaries, shall simply be confiscated by the State without compensation. If the democrats propose proportional taxation, the workers must demand progressive taxation; if the democrats themselves declare for a moderate progressive tax, the workers must insist on a tax so steeply graduated as to cause the collapse of large capital; if the democrats propose the regulation of the National Debt, the workers must demand State bankruptcy. The demands of the workers will depend on the proposals and measures of the democrats.

If the German workers will only come to power and to the enforcement of their class interests after a prolonged revolutionary development, they will at least gain the certainty that the first act of this revolutionary drama will coincide with the victory of their class in France, and this will surely accelerate the movement of their own emancipation. But they themselves must accomplish the greater part of the work; they must be conscious of their class interests and take up the position of an independent party. They must not be diverted from their course of proletarian independence by the hypocrisy of the democratic petty bourgeoisie. Their battle-cry must be: "The revolution in permanence."

London, March, 1850.

## "SOCIALISM AND RELIGION"

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## Bradlaugh's Slanders on Marx

### Secularists Condone Murder of the Communards

In his superficial and prejudiced life of Marx ("Karl Marx: A Study in Fanaticism," reviewed in our July issue), Mr. E. H. Carr attempted to escape responsibility for his inadequate knowledge and preparation by pleading the inaccessibility of documents. He complained of his inability to get hold of periodicals containing "Marx's letters and lesser-known writings," and wrote:—

To quote one example, I have been completely unable to trace in this country any copy of a short-lived journal called the "Eastern Post," which contained in 1871 a spirited controversy between Marx and Bradlaugh on the Paris Commune.

Why Mr. Carr was "completely unable to trace" the "Eastern Post" is hard to explain, except on the assumption that he did not seriously try. So far from being short-lived, the "Eastern Post" is still in existence, and has been since its first issue on October 18th, 1868. Mr. Carr could have found this out with surpassing ease, and at the British Museum he could have gleaned all the information he required instantly. However, we can be grateful to Mr. Carr's negligence since it has led the present writer to look up the interesting controversy referred to. Here we see Marx, the mental giant, at grips with Bradlaugh and others of the individualists, who, while asserting their loyalty to the cause of "freedom," were enemies of the working-class movement. These men, Bradlaugh, G. J. Holyoake, and G. W. Foote were the personification of bourgeois reaction.

### Marx's "Civil War in France."

The cause of the dispute between Bradlaugh and Marx was Marx's "Address on the Civil War in France." After the suppression of the Commune in 1871, "Republicans" and "Secularists" fell over one another to express their sympathy for the victims of the cold-blooded slaughter, carried out by the French Government, but while G. W. Foote, for example ("National Reformer," June 11th, 1871, page 378) was condemning the Communards for having endeavoured "forcibly to organise a regular Government in the name of a new social order," it was in reality the idea of the new social order itself—the idea of Socialism, to which they were opposed.

Marx delivered his address, and it was ordered to be published by the General Council of the International Working Men's Association. It described the terror; the slaughter of defenceless women and children in their thousands, so horrifying, in fact, that the correspondents of the English Press exposed the actions of the "government" of France. "The Times," "Daily News," and other papers, were condemnatory in every way

against the butchers of the workers. Marx, in his address, singled out—one of several instances—the bloody guilt of Jules Favre, the Foreign Minister in the Thiers Government—which was, by the way, sanctioned by Bismarck. The Government left Paris, but due to an oversight, some of the private correspondence that passed between the Ministers was overlooked. Favre, in a private letter to Gambetta, admitted that they were NOT defending Paris from the Prussian soldiers, but against the working class, this after his public assertion that we "will not cede an inch of your territory, nor a stone of your fortresses." As a consequence of the seizure of these letters, M. Milliere published a series of legal documents proving that Jules Favre, "living in concubinage with the wife of a drunkard resident in Algiers, had, by a most daring concoction of forgeries, spread over many years, contrived to grasp in the name of the children of his adultery, a large succession, which made him a rich man, and that, in a lawsuit undertaken by the legitimate heirs, he only escaped exposure by the connivance of the Bonapartist tribunals." When Favre returned to Paris after the suppression of the Commune, Milliere was shot!

On July 9th, 1871, on page 1 of the "National Reformer," Charles Bradlaugh, in a review of Marx's address,

Deeply regretted that a strong case had been weakened, as we believe it to be, by the introduction into the address of coarse and useless personalities. Surely the reference to Jules Favre's domestic relations can have but . . . etc.

In the following issue of the "National Reformer" a reply appeared from George Harris, Joint Secretary of the "International," in which Harris said:—

Now, sir, I hold . . . it was of the highest importance and imperatively necessary to refer to Jules Favre's domestic relations, because without such reference his forgery and crime could not have been exposed. Therefore, instead of repeating the real burden of Dr. Marx's charge, Mr. Bradlaugh simply misleads his readers by speaking only of "reference to Jules Favre's domestic relations." Is "forgery," I would ask, a domestic relation?

This attack produced neither apology nor reply from Bradlaugh. Nothing else was to be expected from him, for his attitude throughout the Commune—and after—was that of a steady supporter of the vile and treacherous Jules Favre. Bradlaugh tried to get out of this mess by saying it was a terrible thing, and asked for pity for the murderer, Favre. He attempted, under the guise of being a "lover of freedom," to protect Favre, who, apart from arranging the cold-blooded murder of Milliere, betrayed the Parisians to Bismarck, carried out Bismarck's instructions, and was also responsible for the massacre of thousands of women and children. This was Favre's friend! No wonder Bradlaugh—after the Franco-Prussian War—hated Marx. Marx had exposed his (Bradlaugh's) friends.

Bradlaugh, no doubt, realised the growing power of the International in European affairs, and the increasing importance of Marx. Bradlaugh had lived on his reputation as a reformer, and saw how his "Republican" propaganda was fizzling out. He therefore began attacking the International and Marx.

Hales, who was Corresponding Secretary of the International, also replied to Bradlaugh. A week later the latter notified his friends through the "National Reformer" (September 30th, 1871), that he was not a member of the International, and that the organisation had few members, and had little influence.

During the second week in December Bradlaugh again attacked the Communards. He protested against class government; he wanted an aristocracy of intellect! On December 16th, 1871, in the "Eastern Post," Bradlaugh, replying to a charge of poking his nose into the private domestic circumstances of a lady refugee from Paris, sought to obscure the issue by ending his letter as follows:—

I feel indebted to Karl Marx for his enmity. If I were one of his own countrymen he might betray me to his government, here he can only calumniate.

As this letter has never been issued in any work on Marx we take pleasure in giving it the necessary publicity. (Perhaps the Director of Marx/Engels/Lenin/Stalin Institute will note and see to it that the index of the "Karl Marx; Chronik Seines Lebens" is altered accordingly?) Marx replied as follows:—

Sir,—In his last epistle to you, Mr. Charles Bradlaugh makes the report of the sitting of the General Council of December 12th—a sitting from which I was absent in consequence of illness—the pretext for discharging on me his ruffianism. He says, "I feel indebted to Karl Marx for his enmity." My enmity to Mr. Charles Bradlaugh! Ever since the publication of the "Address on the Civil War in France" Mr. Bradlaugh's voice has chimed in with world-wide chorus of slander against the "International" and myself. I treated him like the other revilers, with contemptuous silence. This was more than the grotesque vanity of that huge self-idolator could stand. I "calumniated" him because I took no notice of his calumnies. My silence drove him mad; in a public meeting he denounced me as a *Bonapartist*, because in the "Address on the Civil War" I had forsooth laid bare the historic circumstances that gave birth to the Second Empire. He now goes a step further and transforms me into a police agent of Bismarck. Poor man! He must needs show that the lessons he has recently received at Paris from the infamous Emile de Gerardin and his clique are not lost upon him. For the present, I shall "betray him" to the German public by giving the greatest possible circulation to his epistle. If he is kind enough to clothe his libels in a more tangible shape I shall "betray him" to an English law court.

I am, Sir,  
Yours obediently,  
KARL MARX.

John Hales, Secretary of the International, supplemented this letter with another:—

With reference to Mr. Bradlaugh's insinuation against Dr. Marx, I say that it is as lying as it is malicious, and with that I leave the matter, knowing



that Dr. Marx needs no vindicator. But I would make one remark about Mr. Bradlaugh, "Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones." Mr. Bradlaugh has been on one or two missions to Paris lately. I know of no workmen's organisations which employ secret emissaries, and as Mr. Bradlaugh has not a reputation for working for nothing, I would ask whether there was any connection between his visits and the recent Bonapartist intrigues. Dirty tools are usually employed to do dirty work, and it is well known that the Bonapartists are not particular as to what instruments they use.

### Bradlaugh's Hostility towards Socialism.

A few days later, on December 19th, Marx was present at a meeting of the International, and called attention to these facts, and also the fact that Bradlaugh, to "prove" a case against Marx, had stripped a quotation from its context. This falsification, said Marx, "was deliberate and intentional." Marx pointed out that when in Paris, Bradlaugh resorted and dined with the most infamous men in France. Referring to Bradlaugh's political attitude, Marx said:—

He could understand the secret of the man's malignity; he was opposed to a labour movement; he only wished to see a little shuffling of the cards, a little re-distribution of political power, just sufficient to enable him to rise to a higher position, and that he knew he (Marx) represented the labour struggle, a struggle that would effect the emancipation of the people by abolishing classes and class distinctions; that was not what Bradlaugh wanted; hence his opposition.

Following this, "Le Soir," the reactionary Parisian paper, deemed it necessary to aid Bradlaugh, and circulated a feeble apology for him, as he was a contributor to its columns. The attitude of Bradlaugh's friends in Paris might be understood when the reader is reminded that when Victor Hugo stood as candidate he demanded a political amnesty for the Communards. Victor Hugo polled 93,423 votes. Bradlaugh's paper, "Le Soir," opposed Hugo solely on the grounds that he favoured the amnesty. The voters were called "brigands and assassins" by "Le Soir."

Marx, on January 20th, 1872, enters the lists once more, and writes to the Editor of the "Eastern Post":—

Sir,—In the "National Reformer" of January 10th, Mr. Bradlaugh says: "We only meant to allege that Dr. Marx had, in former times, given information to his own Government."

I simply declare that is calumny as ridiculous as it is infamous. I call upon Mr. Bradlaugh to publish any fact that could afford him even the slightest pretext for his statement. For his personal tranquillity I add that he shall not be challenged.

Yours, etc.,  
KARL MARX.

Bradlaugh realised the trouncing he had received and was anxious to call off the hostilities, and on January 22nd, 1872, was desirous of "submitting the whole question between myself on the one hand and Dr. Marx and the International on the other to a Council of Honour. . . ."

Marx's final word after the request of Bradlaugh was as follows:—

To the Editor of the "Eastern Post," February 3rd, 1872.

Sir, (Owing to printing errors the opening is omitted.) . . . lous as it is infamous. I did so in order not to justify myself, but to expose him. With the low cunning of a solicitor's clerk he tries to escape this liability by inviting me to a "Court of Honour."

Does he really fancy that a Bradlaugh or the editors of the Paris *demi-monde* Press, or those of the Bismarckian papers at Berlin, or the "Tages Presse" at Vienna, or the "Kriminal Zeitung" at New York, or the "Moscow Gazette," have only to slander me, in order to make me amenable to clear my public character, and even do so before a "Council of Honour" of which the friends of these "honourable" gentlemen must form part.

I have done with Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, and leave him to all the comforts he may derive from the quite contemplation of his own self.

I am,  
Yours obediently,  
KARL MARX.

So ended the heroics of the "great" Bradlaugh. We need only add in conclusion a word about one of his supporters, another trickster—George Jacob Holyoake, who, because of Marx's address, repudiated and attacked the International in a letter to "The Daily News." This was after Holyoake had tried to enter the organisation, but the General Council refused him membership. This Holyoake denied, but the minutes proved the truth. Weston, who moved the acceptance of Holyoake's membership, was compelled to withdraw it, and Holyoake was so informed by Weston himself.

MOSES BARITZ.

### NORMANTON, YORKS.

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Thursday, December 13th, at 7.30 p.m.

Subject—

"The S.P.G.B. and Questions of the Day"

Speaker—E. BODEN

Admission Free - - - Questions and Discussion

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### NOTTINGHAM

## COSMO DEBATING SOCIETY

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
NOTTINGHAM

Sunday, December 23rd, at 2.30 p.m.

MOSES BARITZ—

"New Light on Marx and Engels"

### RUSSIAN "GOLD RUSH."

The following throws light on Russian development as a power, with the orthodox capitalist interest in world trade. The present position may be contrasted with Lenin's view as to what the Bolsheviks would do if they were victorious on a world scale, as in the early days they confidently expected to be.

From the "Manchester Guardian's" Moscow correspondent:—

A "gold rush" in the Soviet goldfields by farmers become prospectors is envisaged by A. Serebrovski, president of the Gold Administration, in to-day's "Izvestia."

After the harvest the Government is stocking shops in the gold regions with a profusion of goods for fair exchange for miners' nuggets and dust, for the Government recently reversed its policy of confining prospecting to State trusts, and freelances have already played a considerable part in the year's sharp rise in gold output. Serebrovski, indeed, emphasises the necessity of encouraging them in every way. ("Manchester Guardian," September 13th.)

Lenin on Gold:—

When we conquer on a world scale we shall, I think, use gold for making public lavatories in the streets of the great cities of the world. That would be the most "just" and graphically edifying use of gold for the generations which have not forgotten that for gold ten million people were massacred and thirty million crippled in the "great liberation" war of 1914-1918. (Quoted in "Lenin," by Ralph Fox.)

## MEETINGS and LECTURES

All of the lectures announced below are open to non-members. Admission free. Questions and discussion are welcomed.

### SUNDAY MEETINGS AT HEAD OFFICE

Lectures are given every Sunday evening at Head Office, 42 Great Dover Street, S.E.1, at 8.30 p.m.

December 2nd	"Fascism, War and a word to the Unconverted."	ROSS
" 9th	"Slavery."	REGINALD
" 16th	"Profit and the Gods."	LESTER
" 23rd	"Man's Coming of Age."	GINSBERG
" 30th	"Thought and Action."	WILMOT

### HACKNEY

Lectures are given each Friday evening at 8.30 p.m., at Old Gravel P.t Hall, Vallette Street.

December 7th	"War and Socialism."	GINSBERG
" 14th	"Class Struggles."	ISBITSKY
" 21st	"Communist Party and Class Struggle."	CASH
" 28th	"Superstitions, Old and New."	SANDY

### ROMFORD

Lectures are given on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at N.U.R. Club, Albert Road, Romford.

### PADDINGTON

A Lecture with questions and discussion will be held on Friday, December 28th, at 8 p.m., in the Guild Room, over "Co-op" Stores, 447 Harrow Road, W.10.

### WOOD GREEN

A Lecture will be given on Friday, December 14th, at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

"Common Ownership of the Means of Living."  
Speaker—Turner

### LEYTON

Lectures at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, on Sunday evenings at 8 p.m.

December 2nd	"Communist Party and the Class Struggle."	CASH
" 9th	"Is Socialism Practical?"	RUBINS
" 16th	"The British Empire."	STEWART

### ISLINGTON

Lectures will be given at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, at 8 p.m., on Friday evenings.

December 7th	"Socialism and the Labour Party."	S. SEGAL
" 21st	"Evolution of Transport."	E. KERSLEY

### BLOOMSBURY

Lectures are given each Monday evening at 8.30 p.m. at A.E.U. Hall, 39 Doughty Street, Corner of Guildford Street, W.C.1.

December 3rd	"Marxism and Darwinism."	C. LESTER
" 10th	"Causes and Consequences of the World War."	E. HARDY
" 17th	"Superstitions, Old and New"	SANDY
" 31st	"Russia Today."	(OPEN DISCUSSION)

## EDUCATIONAL COURSE FOR PARTY MEMBERS.

Classes will be held at Head Office on Sundays from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., as follows:—

December 2nd	"Causes and Consequences of the World War."
" 9th	"The British Empire."
" 16th	"American History"
" 23rd	"History of Parliament."
" 30th	"History of Trades Unions."
January 6th	"General Strikes."

## INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS

Held at Head Office

Informal political discussions are being arranged for each Saturday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., at Head Office, commencing on December 8th. Tea will be available.

### Readings from Socialist Classics

Commencing Tuesday, December 4th, readings from Socialists classics will take place each Tuesday evening, at Head Office, from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.



## Open Air Meetings

### DECEMBER

#### Sundays:

	Dec. 2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
Regents Park...	11.30 a.m. Lester.	Ross.	Isbitsky.	Wilmot.	Reginald.
Brockwell Park...	11.30 a.m. Ambridge.	Ambridge.	Ross.	Godfrey.	Lester.
Finsbury Park...	11.30 a.m. Reginald.	Isbitsky.	Godfrey.	Ambridge.	Ross.
Clapham Common...	3 p.m. Ross.	Banks.	Ginsberg.	Banks.	Ambridge.

#### Saturdays:

Jolly Butcher's Hill, Wood Green	8 p.m.	West Green Corner, Tottenham	8 p.m.
Rushcroft Road, Brixton, Opp. Lambeth Town Hall	7.30 p.m.		

#### Mondays:

King's Hall Picture House, Bakers Arms, Leyton	8 p.m.	Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8	8 p.m.
Highbury Corner, N.	8 p.m.		

#### Tuesdays:

Clissold Corner, Albion Road, N.16	8 p.m.
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#### Wednesdays:

West Green Corner, Tottenham, N.	8 p.m.	Windsor Road, Forest Gate, E.	8 p.m.
Clock Tower, Avenue Road, Lewisham, S.E.	8 p.m.		

#### Thursdays:

Ridley Road, Dalston, E.8.	8 p.m.	"Salmon and Ball," Bethnal Green, E.	8 p.m.
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#### Fridays:

Iford Station, E.	8 p.m.	"Chequers," Ripple Road, Dagenham	8 p.m.
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### BRANCH DIRECTORY

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury Road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m., at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.

**BIRKENHEAD.**—Communications to H. Dawson, 36, Meadow Street, Birkenhead, Cheshire

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec., E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets Jeans Café, Newton Street. First Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.

**BLOOMSBURY.**—Branch meets every Monday at 7.30 p.m., at A.E.U. Hall, 39, Doughty Street, W.C. (Near Grays Inn, Road.) Miss B. Foster, Sec., S.P.G.B., at above address.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CHISWICK.**—(See West London).

**DAGENHAM.**—Branch meets alternate Mondays (from August 6th) at 8 p.m., Pettits' Farm, Heathway. Sec. J. Oliver, 87, Rogers Road, Dagenham, Essex.

**ECLES.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Mondays in month at Railway Temperance Room, Four Bridges, Wellington Road, 7.30 p.m. Lecture and discussion, 8.45. Non-members invited. Secretary, Mrs. F. LEA, 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Lancs.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Sec., D. Lamond, at 15, Barclay Place.

**GLASGOW.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Mondays in month, 8 p.m., at 98 Naburn Street, Glasgow, C.5. Communications to M. Falconer at above address.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Friday, 7.30 p.m., at Old Gravel Pit Hall, Vallette Street, E.9. Lecture after each meeting. Communication to Sec., E. Hatwell, 36, Haggerston Road, Dalston, E.8.

**HULL.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays, at York Room, The Metropole. Communications to Sec., at 62, Ampleforth Grove, Willerby Road.

**ILFORD.**—Branch meets Mondays at 8 p.m. at 142, Richmond Road. Discussion after Branch business. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**ISLINGTON.**—All communications to F. W., 92, Wellington Road, Holloway, N.2. Branch meets on Fridays at 8 to 10.30 p.m., at Room 4, Co-operative Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., Mrs. E. C. Snell, 17, Theobald Road, E.17. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

**MANCHESTER.**—Branch meets fortnightly (Mondays) as from 14 Jan., at Craigwell Restaurant, Peter Street (entrance in South Street). Sec., B. A. Lee, 19, Emery Avenue, Chorlton, Manchester.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd Friday, and lecture with discussion on 4th Friday in each month, 8 p.m., in the guild room over "Co-op. Stores," 447, Harrow Road, W.10. Literature Sec., W. Veal, 73, Wornington Road, W.10.

**ROMFORD.**—Branch meets on Mondays at 8 p.m., N.U.R. Club, Albert Road, Romford. Non-members invited. Lecture and discussion on alternate Mondays. Secy. Lindley E. Lock, 327, Rush Green Road, Romford.

**SHEFFIELD.**—Sec., G. H. Southey, 83, Wallace Road, Sheffield, 3. Branch meets alternate Mondays, 7.30 p.m. at Room 10, Friend's School, Harthead.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in the month, at 8 p.m. at 6, Hermitage Road, Westcliff. Discussion after branch business. Non-members invited. Communications to Sec. at above address.

**SOUTHWARK.**—Branch meets Fridays at 8 p.m., 42, Great Dover St., S.E.1. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**STEPNEY.**—Sec., S. Goldstein, 18, Irene House, Flower & Dene Street, Stepney, E.1. Branch meets on Fridays, at 8 p.m., at Working Lads Institute (nr. Whitechapel Station).

**TOOTING.**—Sec., W. Mehew, 19, Littleton Street, S.W.18. Branch meets 1st Sunday in the month at "The Springfield Social Club," 590, Garrett Lane, S.W.17 (Opposite Burntwood Lane).

**TOTTENHAM.**—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Fridays in the month, 7, Bruce Grove, Room 2. Discussion after branch business. Public invited. Communications to C. Godfrey, 49, Napier Road, Tottenham, N.7.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Branch meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. at the Workman's Hall (Room 2), High Street, E.17. Sec., Clifford Beloe, 158, Northcote Road, Walthamstow, E.17. Lecture and discussion on alternate Wednesdays.

**WEST HAM.**—Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave Road, Stratford, E. Branch meets Whitehall Schools, Parliament Place, Forest Gate, every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**WEST LONDON (Chiswick).**—Branch meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Chiswick Club, over 376, High Road, Chiswick, W.4. Communications to Sec., C. Curtis, 52, Parkstead Road, Putney, S.W.15.

**WEMBLEY.**—Communications to H. G. Holt, 28, Charterhouse Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. in the Elm Hotel Annexe, St. John's Road, off High Road, Wembley.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Communications to Sec. at 44, Boreham Road, Wood Green, N.22. Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month at 8.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent.